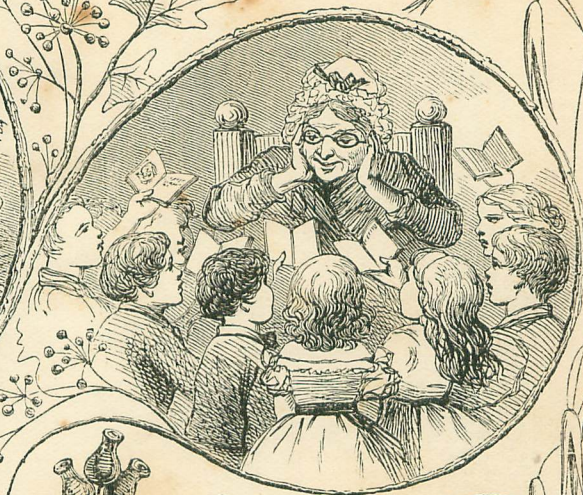
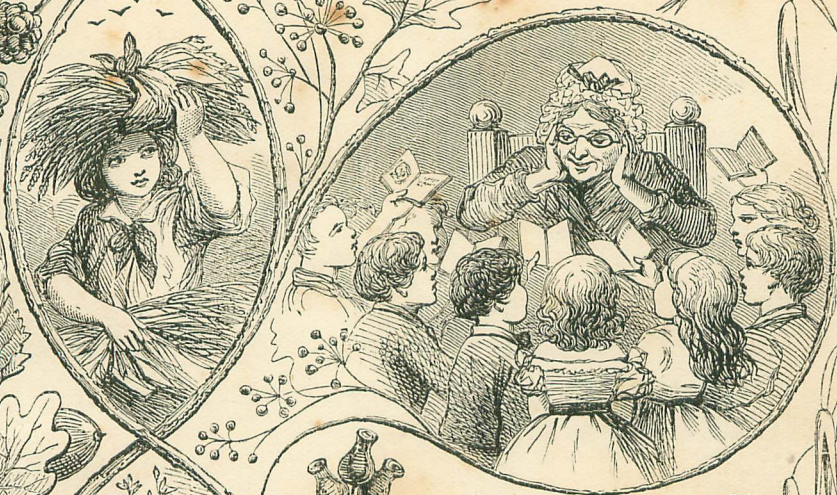


Chatterbox

EDITED BY JERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.

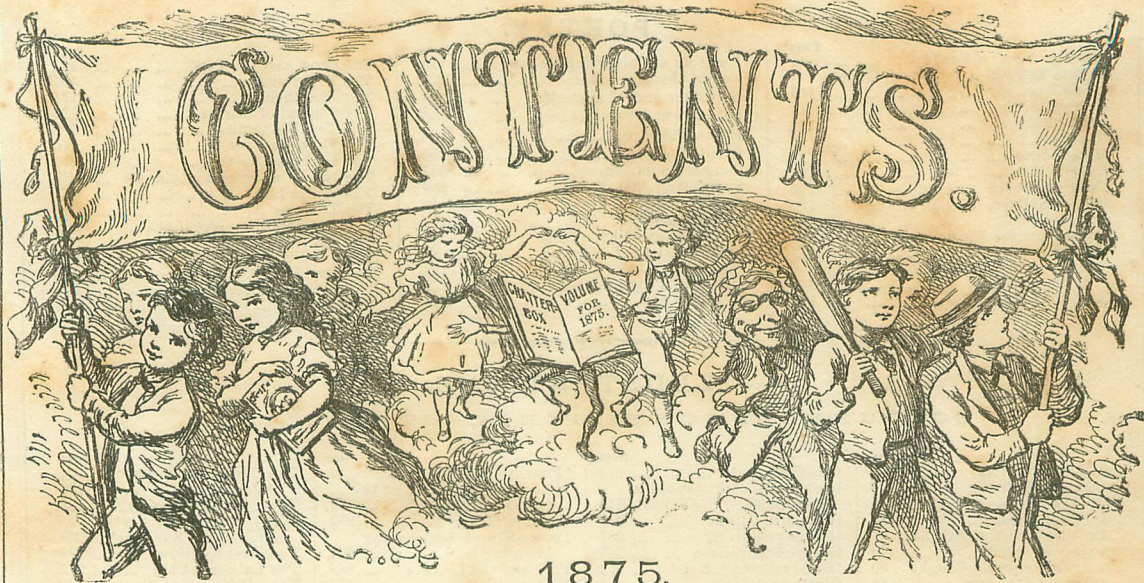


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THE SLIDE.

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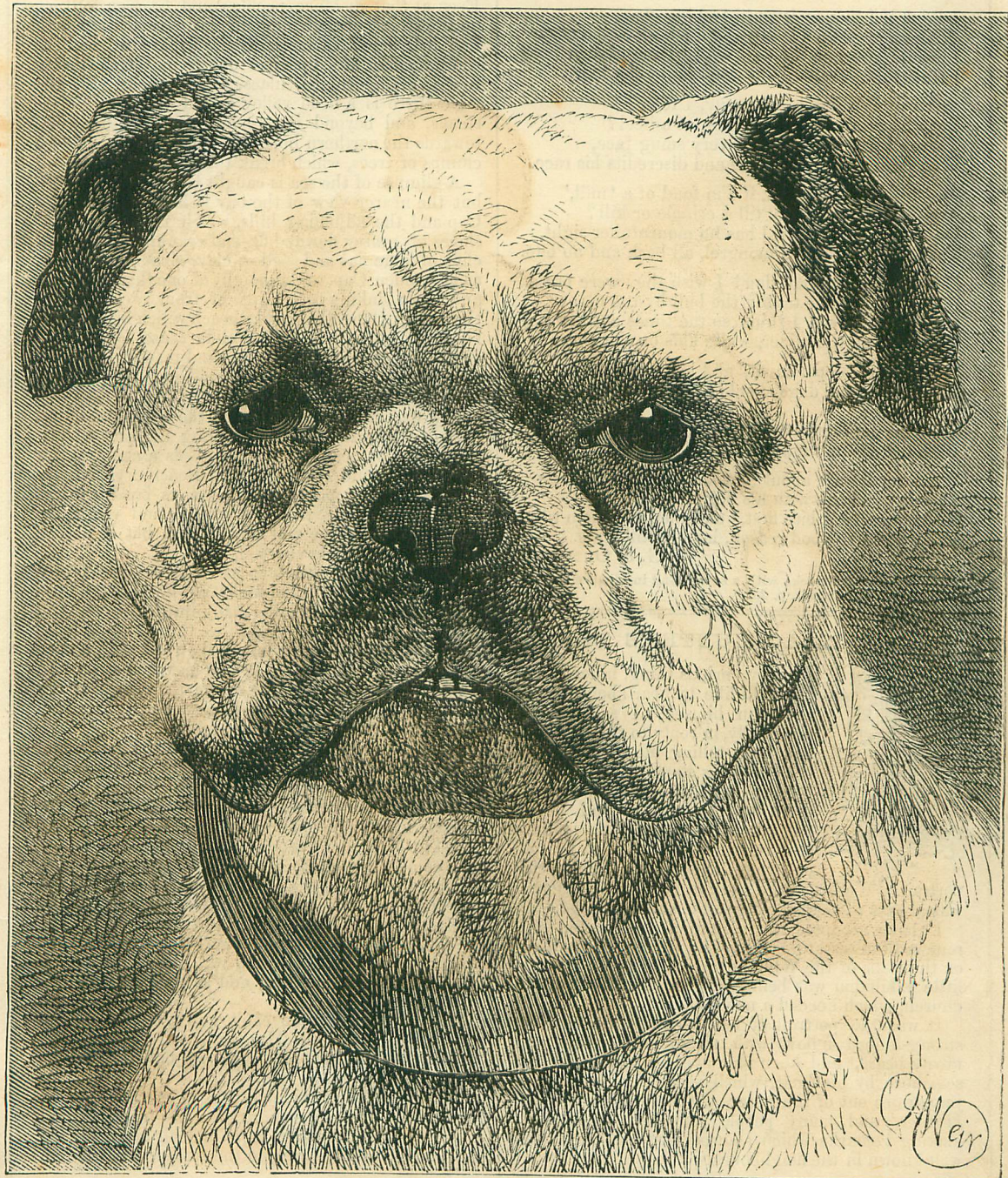
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Chatterbox.



The Bull-Dog. By HARRISON WEIR.

THE BULL-DOG.

AND have I indeed such a villainous leer?
Do you do a dog justice now, Harrison Weir?
What a savage expression! how frightful a frown!
No wonder I'm shunned as I walk through the town.

I think if I met such an ill-looking chap,
With an eye like a spark and a mouth like a trap,
I should give him the wall, with 'Your servant I beg,
I trust that your worship won't fancy my leg.'

Fair play is a jewel—I'm ugly, I feel,
But who ever knew me to bark at a heel?
There's many a dog with a very smug face,
Who does such dirty tricks and discredits his race.

And where is the harm, if I'm fond of a 'mill,'
And hold where I bite, till I cripple or kill?
I'm sure the wide world has no mournfuller sight,
Than a mean-hearted mongrel, all bark and no bite.

Here's lines on a bull-dog! I wish they were prose,
It seems more like taking the bull by the nose:
We shall soon see, I think, so the times onward leap,
Fine lawn on the miner, white kids on the sweep.

If I practise 'deportment,' and learn 'etiquette,'
As they tell me dogs should now, it won't please old
Bet;

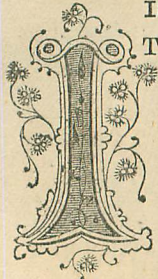
She likes me the best, I know, just as I am—
With her and my master I'm soft as a lamb.

When rogues are about him, I know that he feels
As safe as a bank with his dog at his heels;
He knows that I bite first,* and then tell them why,
And when I've good reason, hold on till I die.

G. S. OUTRAM.

* 'The bull-dog attacks with a savage and insidious silence.'—
Bell's British Quadrupeds, p. 251.

ISAAC HUNTER'S DREAM.



It is a very curious thing, indeed; but I should like to hear about it from the man himself; I said, rather doubtfully, in reply to the lady who had been telling me the outline of the following story.

'Very well,' she returned; 'come down to Charmouth, and F—— will take you to see him. I have only repeated to you what he told us while she was painting this portrait. We heard the story often; but the account was always the same, even to the smallest details.'

I gladly accepted the invitation, and turned with renewed interest to look at the picture, which hung on the walls of the Whitechurch school-room, where a little exhibition was being held for the benefit of the church, which needed a new roof.

It was the portrait of a fisherman—a handsome, strong-limbed fellow, with rough brown hair, and tawny beard, and keen blue eyes—standing on the sea-shore by his boat, which seemed to have been just drawn out of the water. It was ticketed 'Isaac Hunter,' and many people paused to look at it, making remarks which showed that his name was well known in the neighbourhood.

On the following Friday, June 6th, I went down to Charmouth. Two miles before entering the place the pretty village was well in sight, as it stretched itself into white lines of comfortable cottages and cosy villas on either side of the road which climbs the steep hill leading to Axminster and Lyme Regis. Even at that distance people could be seen walking up the street, or gossiping on the pavement, looking like little black dolls against the white road and the white houses which peeped out from the sheltering foliage of laburnums, lilacs, and syringas. To the right there is a little valley dotted with grey farmsteads, and beyond it one hill after another rises towards the northern horizon, their tops crowned with clumps of trees, which break the distant sky-line.

A glimpse of the sea is caught below Lyme Regis, but the nearer view of the bay is hidden by Golden Cap and the adjoining hills, which rise upwards in slopes of grassy down, but end seawards in jagged cliffs of blue lias and yellow clay, sometimes rising, as at Golden Cap, to the height of one thousand feet, and again sinking to a range of from twenty-five to thirty feet above the pebbly beach which lies at their base. At Charmouth the cliffs cease for a short distance, a belt of shingle and sand reaches up to the two lanes which approach the village, and the little river finds its way through marshy beds of rush and yellow flag till it spreads over the shore in half a dozen bright little streams, making the long narrow bridge of planks across the rush-beds a necessity for those who would reach the East Beach dryshod.

On Saturday morning, as soon as breakfast was over, F—— said, 'Now we will go and see Isaac Hunter; perhaps he will be at home, but if not we shall find him on the shore.'

So we went up the steep white street, past pretty gardens, and tiny, smooth-shaven lawns, and little greenhouses, bright with many-hued flowers, and nearly at the top of the village we turned into a long, low stone cottage on the left of the road, with a deep porch standing at the top of two or three steps, and a flagged passage running down the centre of the building and dividing the two houses, which shared the roof between them.

F—— turned into the doorway on the right, and a tall, gentle-mannered woman, came forward from the bustle of a Saturday cleaning which was going on in the kitchen, conjointly with dressmaking work for a lovely little girl about eight years old, who, attired in the skirt of a new garment and the body of an old one, came shyly up to F——, and in answer to her inquiries said that her sister in service had sent her a new frock, which was being tried on.

Mrs. Hunter told us that her husband was in the garden, and proposed sending for him; but we felt that we should be interfering with the house-work if we stayed in the kitchen, and so we said we would go to him.

'But I'm afraid you can't get into the garden, ma'am,' objected Mrs. Hunter. 'It's not our own; we rent it from next door, and we have to go up a ladder to get over the wall.'

This sounded formidable, but on going to see we found the wall was not more than five feet high, and a very easy ladder made it no difficult task to reach the garden, which, owing to the steepness of the hill,

stood on a much higher level than the cottage. We went up, attended by five bright-eyed, curly-headed little children, and found Isaac, in a blue jersey and fishing-cap, earthing up potatoes at the far end of the enclosure.

After a little talk about the weather, the potatoes, and the mackerel—that topic of special interest to every fisherman on the South coast during the months of May and June—I said:—

‘Will you tell me about the wreck, Mr. Hunter? It is a very curious story, and I should like to hear about it from yourself.’

‘It is a very curious story, and I can’t account for it noway; but it’s true, for all that,’ replied Isaac, resting on his hoe as he began, while F—— and I sat down among the potatoes, for the day was hot, though a fresh north wind was blowing.

The children grouped themselves by F——, and tried to make her play with them, for they were great friends, and I recognised in their curly heads more than one of the studies which hung on the wall of her painting-room.

‘We had all gone to bed as usual on the Saturday night, when I had a dream that troubled me ever so,’ began Isaac. ‘I thought I was out under Golden Cap and that all my pots* had come ashore, and the waves were washing up round me, and I couldn’t find a place to put them safe. I tried to put them first in one place and then another, but the sea came higher over the sand—for in my dream the shore was not covered with shingle, as it really is, but with sand—and the water got closer and closer, and I was in ever such a way lest the pots should be lost. After a bit I awoke; but the dream hung about me, and I could not be easy, it seemed as if I *must* get up and go to the shore. So I told the missus about it, and got her to light the candle. It was between one and two o’clock, and it seemed foolish to get up at that time, and, as the missus said, it were nothing but a dream, we put out the light, and after a bit I fell asleep. But the dream came back to me. All the pots had been washed ashore, and I couldn’t find a place to put them safe. Well, I awoke again, and for a little while I lay still, thinking that it was all nonsense to be troubled about a dream, and trying to make my mind easy; but it wasn’t any use: do what I would I couldn’t rest, and it seemed to come upon me stronger and stronger that I *must* get up and go down to the shore to see to those pots.’

‘Had you ever been uneasy about them before?’ I asked.

‘No, ma’am! it’s often weeks together before we go to the pots in winter time; we put them out, and then, if the weather is bad, they stay till it gets fine.’

‘How long had yours been out?’

‘About three weeks: and I don’t suppose I had given them a thought all that time. It had been rough weather for a good bit, and a gale blowing in-shore for nigh a week, so there had been no chance of going off. But that night, do what I would, I couldn’t rest. I seemed forced to get up, and it was no use trying to stay in bed: so I asked the missus to light the candle again, and my second boy—he’s about ten years old—came with me, and we went

along the Upper Sea Lane to the shore. As we went through the lane a feeling came over me as if I’d got a rope in my hand and were trying to heave it aboard a ship. It was a very queer sort of feeling, the same as if I was in a dream; but I didn’t take any notice, and down on the shore we met one of the Coast-guard men—Cripps, his name was.

‘Hullo!’ says he, ‘what are you after?’

‘So I told him, and he laughed, and said I had best go back to bed, for he had seen no pots, and it would be as much as I could do to get along to the eastward. So it was, for the waves were running in close up to the cliffs, and I kept tight hold of the little lad’s hand, or he would have been off his feet more than once.

‘We went on pretty near two miles, and as the tide was coming in, and a terrible strong sea on, for it was blowing a gale straight in-shore, it grew worse and worse, till we could hardly get round one of the points; we had to watch till the wash of the wave went back, and make a run; but it was getting dangerous when it came to that, and I says to the lad, “We’ll go home if we don’t see anything round the next turn,” for the more I thought of it the more foolish it seemed to be out of bed at three o’clock on a Sunday morning, just because of a dream.

‘But as we turned the point I saw something on the beach in front of us; a bit of cliff was between us and it, and in the dim light (for there was driving clouds over the sky, and a little bit of moonlight now and then, and things looked uncertain when you were not close to them), I thought that a piece of Golden Cap had tumbled down, or that the mists made the cliff look queer. I never thought what it was; but in a minute we were round, and there was a ship lying up on the beach, bowsprit on, and her mast standing up against the sky!

‘I rubbed my eyes then, and wasn’t sure whether I was dreaming again or not, for to find a ship tossed up on the shingle like that gave me a turn; it was such an unlikely thing to happen along our coast, you see, for if there’s ever so little wind ships give the bay a wide berth, knowing it to be dangerous. But there it was, and the little lad was terribly frightened of seeing the dead bodies washed in, for the waves swept over her in great sheets of water, and we made sure nothing living could be aboard. I told him not to mind, and kept hold of him while we ran as fast as we could across the shingle; and then, when we came as close to her as was possible, we saw something on the bowsprit. It was a man, and I shouted to him; but he did not take any heed for a bit, and I made sure he was dead: but I went on shouting, and after a time he hailed back, but it was some foreign words that I could not make out; and I don’t suppose he could understand me, for I wanted to make it clear to him to hold on while I went for help, but I suppose it was about ten minutes before he took it in. But he threw up his arms at last, and I knew it was all right; so me and the little lad ran away and up the steps, for the ship lay a few yards to the westward of the station at West Hay, where there is a coast-guard on duty by day, but he hasn’t any night-work, and lives a little way in-shore. I called him first—he was nearest, and then we ran on to West Hay Farm, Mr. Harris’s.’

* Lobster Pots.



"We ran as fast as we could across the shingle."

'How far was that?' I asked.

'Half a mile, and all up hill; but we weren't long going; we did run that night; and Mr. Harris was down in a minute when he knew what was the matter. He knocked up a couple of labourers living by the farm, and got some strong rope, and were back again by the ship as quick as we could. There was no time to lose, you see, for any of the great waves that came thundering in over the beach might wash

the man away; or, still more likely, break up the ship: and it seemed a race between us and the sea as to which should have him.

'The coast-guard was there before us, and by that time he had made out three men—the one on the bowsprit, another in the rigging, and a third hanging on the ladder by his hands and feet; but he never stirred.

(Concluded in our next.)



CHARITY.

UP and down the village street,
Though the cold winds blow,
Comes a kind and comely maiden,
Dancing through the snow.

Oh! a winsome one is she,
Fair as any pearl;
Dearest one of sisters three
Is that little girl.

What cares she for wind or storm,
Or the blasts that blow?
Lightly o'er the frozen drifts,
Onward will she go.

What cares she though some rude boys
Pelt her in their fun?
Though the snowballs hit her hard,
She doesn't scold or run.

Every little hungry child
 Knows the dear one's face;
 Every little grateful heart
 Has for her a place.
 Do you ask the darling's name?
 Just as if I'd tell!
 Every boy and girl in town
 Ought to know her well!
 Ought to know and love the maid
 Who, with ready hand,
 Scatters blessings to the poor
 Up and down the land.
 Still you want to know her name,
 Ah! then—let me see—
 Until you can know her well,
 Call her Charity.

TOM'S OPINION.

CHAPTER I.



THINK that one of the pleasantest things in the holidays is describing all one does at school to mother, the boys one likes and the boys one dislikes, the lessons that are the hardest and the games that are the most fun, and the masters that are the jolliest and the ones that are the crossdest; and I really think she likes to hear it all quite as much as Bertie

and I like to tell it. And she laughs at all the jokes, and fun, and mischief, and does not seem shocked at the wild things we do, or tell us that it is rude to use slang or disrespectful to call the masters 'Old Hutton,' or 'Muffin Bell,' or the French master 'Little Frogs.' Of course, if we had done anything downright wrong we should not like to tell it to mother; at least not in that way, sitting on the table swinging one's legs, or on the arm of her chair, or full length on the rug at her feet: indeed, when I know I have done something wrong, I cannot bear her to look at me even, and I sneak out of the way, and my ears get hot and red, till I hear her say, 'Well, Tom, what is it?' And then I want to hide away my great, hot face, and the only place seems to be on mother's lap: and then she puts her soft hand on my head, and, of course, I can't keep anything in any longer, and out it comes whatever it is. And oh! is not she good?

Well, I was not telling anything in that way that wet afternoon, in the Christmas holidays. Bertie was holding a skein of wool for mother to wind, and I was sitting on the table describing some new boys. Father had come in early from the office, and was reading the paper in the window, and I had almost forgotten that he was in the room and did not think he was listening to what I was saying. I had just finished up my description with these words: 'Hodson is a regular cad, mother, and I know you'd hate the sight of him: but Roy is a brick and no mistake, and that's my opinion.'

Father got up just then, and said, as he was leaving the room, 'Tom, my boy, learn to reserve your opinion.'

And I nodded and looked very wise, but I did not

understand what he meant till I asked mother afterwards.

'Well, Tom, he means that you should not be in a hurry to make up your mind about things and people. Don't be too ready to judge from the first appearance.'

'But, mother, one can tell if one will like a fellow as soon as one sees him. Can't you?'

'Well, Tom, I sometimes think I can, but sometimes I am right and sometimes I am wrong; so first impressions are not always right ones. There are some faces,' mother went on, putting her hand under my chin, and looking with a smile into my eyes, 'that are just like clear glass, and one can almost see the thoughts come bubbling up from the heart, and one feels sure (God grant one may never doubt it!) that it is a true, honest heart, and that those are pure thoughts; and there are other faces where you can read nothing, and these are far more common, and the heart hidden behind may be quite as true, and honest, and pure, though it is not written so plainly on the face. God set the mark of murder on Cain's forehead, that all might see it, but there have been many since then who have had that mark on their hearts out of sight of those around them. St. Stephen's face was seen like the face of an angel before he fell asleep, but we are told of another, far greater than St. Stephen, that He had "no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."'

Mother's voice had grown very low and serious as she spoke, and I had forgotten all about Roy and Hodson and my hastily-formed opinion of them, for I had only seen them for a minute when they came to settle about coming to school after the Christmas holidays.

As it happened they both came on the same day, which made us put them together and compare them more than we should otherwise have done. Now you must know that at Highmore School, where Bertie and I had been for the last year, there was a small class-room leading out of the school-room, and this class-room had a window which looked out in front, so that we could see anything coming to the front-door, and the high road leading down to Saltby. So when there was anything going on in Saltby the seat next the window was much sought after. There was Saltby Fair, when great yellow gipsy-carts went by, and vans with pictures outside, and huge placards telling of man-eaters, gorillas, pig-headed ladies, giants, spotted boys, and all sorts of delightful and interesting things. Sometimes there were troops of soldiers going down to the barracks, cavalry jingling along, with the sun dazzling on their helmets, or a regiment of infantry winding along the road, till they were just a scarlet thread at the turn where they passed out of sight. Sometimes it was a traction-engine lumbering along, shaking the glass in the windows, and puffing out clouds of sooty smoke, and giving a long whistle, that took every word of Latin or Greek out of one's head, and made one long to be the dirty-faced man who drove it, and who had it in his power to make such a hideous noise at any moment. Then there were the hounds. I shall never forget the day—no, never! when the fox came right over the field opposite; and Larry, who was sitting

next the window, shied his book right across the room, and gave the view halloo in the very middle of construing a bit of Virgil. The Doctor was so angry he said he would have the window painted all over; and poor Larry had two hundred lines, and was kept in for a week. The window was not painted over for long, for we each took a turn at the paint with our knives, when we got a chance: so that in a week or two there were only islands of paint here and there; and it was never done again, partly, I think, because the Doctor knew it was of no use, and partly because he liked to take a look out now and then himself.

Then, too, it was great fun to pretend that something very interesting was going on outside, to excite the other boys who were not in such a fortunate position, and could only see your face, which was made to express a gradual change of feeling—first interest, then surprise and pleasure, then great excitement and rapture, then uneasiness and disappointment, gradually turning to fear and horror. Some of the fellows could do this to such perfection, that one could scarcely believe that something very awful was not happening outside: their faces would grow pale, their eyes start in their heads, their mouths drop open, and their whole bodies tremble from head to foot. The first time that Bertie saw this performance he screamed aloud, and the master could not imagine what the reason of his cry could be, and, of course, never found out. Well, you see, that seat by the window had many advantages; but it had one great drawback, and that was, that it was the lowest place in the class: so if one wanted to keep a good place there was no chance of getting it. Now I dare say you think that it is a very easy matter to get to the bottom of a class, though it is very difficult to get to the top sometimes; but if you think this it shows that you have never ridden in a donkey-race, where the prize is given to the one who comes in last; and it also shows that you do not know some of the Highmore boys, for it would take a clever person to beat some of them in stupidity. There is Clarkson, for instance—a fellow who did not the least enjoy the seat by the window—he only cared for going to sleep and eating, and yet it was sometimes impossible to get below him: there was no being stupid enough.

Well, as it happened, I was at the bottom of the class one day, a little time before Christmas, and I saw a carriage coming up the hill from Salby—a very swell carriage indeed, yellow-bodied and high—and a pair of iron-grey horses, with silver-mounted harness, and a fat coachman in a wig and claret livery, and silver buttons, and cockade; two footmen to match, and a spotted carriage-dog, all complete. Inside the carriage were a lady and gentleman, and a boy rather older than myself. The carriage drove in at the gate and drew up before the door, and one of the footmen gave a pull at the bell that echoed through the house; and then the gentleman and boy got out and came into the house, while the lady remained in the carriage, wrapped up in thick furs and velvets, in the middle of which I could see the little round black head and snub nose of a King Charles spaniel. We were just at the end of our French lesson, and the carriage was still standing before the door when we came out from it, and I

was describing the horses and dog to the *other* fellows in the schoolroom in glowing colours, and some one had started the idea that it was the Prince of Wales himself, who had heard of the fame of Highmore School at football, and had brought one of the young princes there in consequence.

'I say, that would be a go!' said Blake. 'We should all have to walk backwards when we went for a walk, and bow seven times whenever we came into the room.'

'Perhaps it's not the Prince of Wales but the Crown Prince of Thingumbob, who married the Princess Whatsername,' said Clarkson, whose memory was not strong.

'Or perhaps it's one of the Shah's sons, all dirt and diamonds, who'd cut off our heads as soon as look at us.'

'Hullo! here's Prince Thingumbob himself!'

For just then the door opened and the Doctor came in with the gentleman and the boy I had seen in the carriage. The Doctor was looking very smiling, and very unlike what he does over Virgil.

'This is the schoolroom, Sir John,' he was saying; 'the arena, I may say, where our young combatants wrestle with learning. Ha! ha! These are some of your future young companions, my dear boy. They have just concluded their studies, and are going to seek for recreation in the grounds.'

'Hear, hear!' said Blake, just behind me, in a low voice. 'Just listen to him! Oh, my! isn't it fine? Comic old gent, the Doctor, very! Well done! Well done! It's quite as good as "the magic donkeys, roars of laughter."'

I kicked out behind at Blake to try and stop him, as I wanted to hear what the Doctor was saying, but he was not to be shut up.

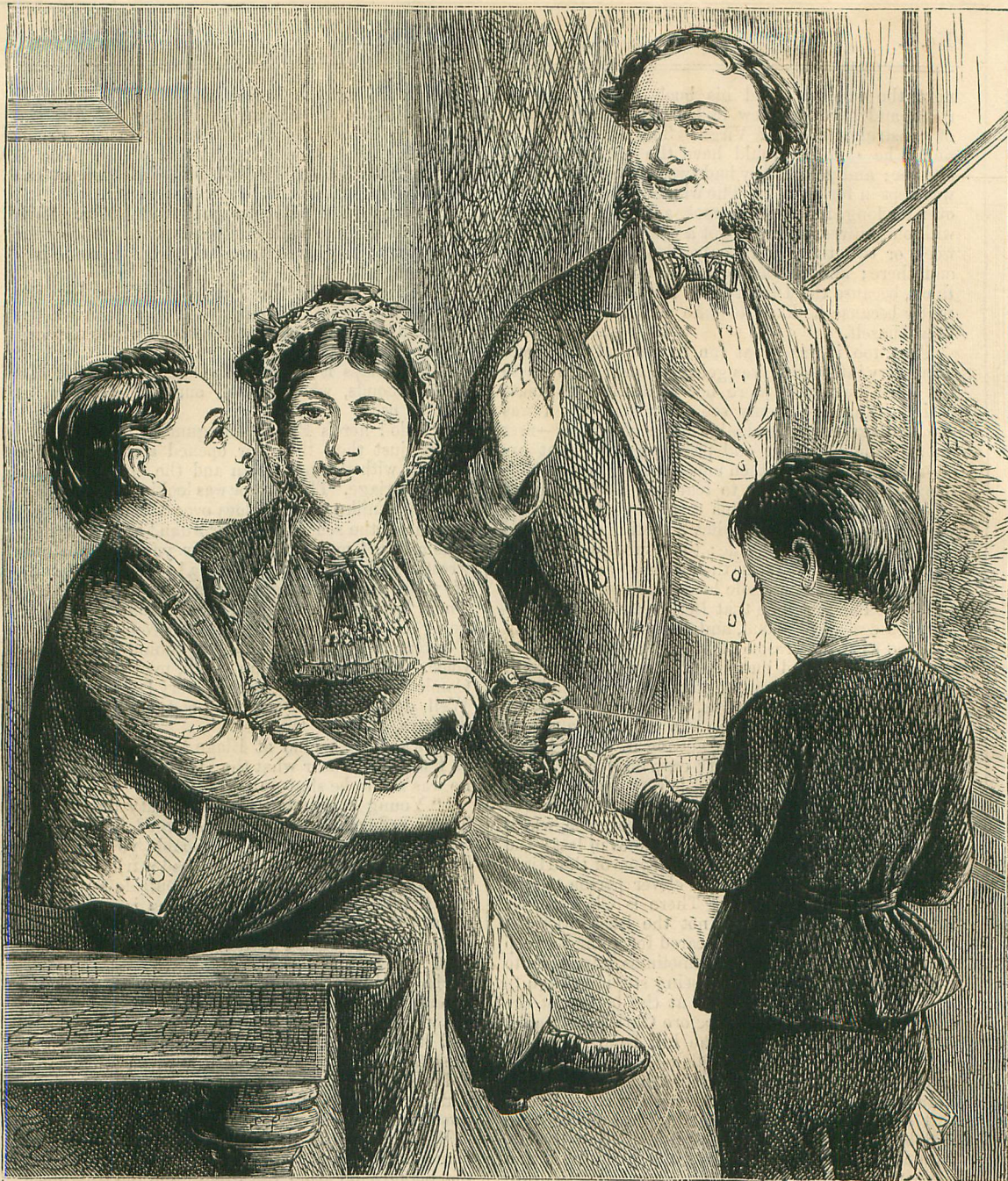
"Young companions, indeed! My dear boy!" That's cribbed out of *Sandford and Merton*, I'm sure. He'll go on to call us amiable youths, see if he don't. I feel already as if I had a frill round my neck and my trousers buttoned up outside my jacket, and a thirst for knowledge; and he is our revered preceptor, "beloved and respected by all who know him. Friends will be pleased to accept this intimation," you know.'

He would keep on with this nonsense, so that I lost all that the Doctor and Sir John were saying; but we all of us took a good look at the new boy, and it was not only my opinion, but the opinion of the whole school, that Harry Roy was a brick.

It was only about half an hour after the carriage, with Sir John and Lady Roy and Harry, had driven away, that Hodson and his mother came.

We were out in the playground, and Blake had climbed up to the top of the wall which separated the playground from the drive up to the front-door. There was not any more to be seen from the wall than we could see from the playground, except the front-door, if that was worth looking at; but Blake had with great labour and difficulty driven pegs into the wall, and taken away by degrees the broken glass that was put along the top, and he used to go up with great triumph to 'take a survey' as he called it. This afternoon he came down from his perch splitting with laughter.

(To be continued.)



Bertie holding the skein for his mother to wind.

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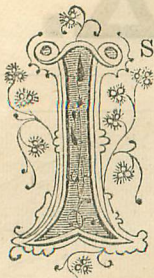
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Chatterbox.



Sir John Roy's visit to Harry at the School.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 7).

SAY! I've been and gone and done it! I saw an old woman coming up with a boy carrying a basket, and she was making for the front-door, and I thought she had brought a message or something, so I sang out, "Hullo, there! that's not the way to the back-door. You'll catch it if you go there!" And what do you think it turned out? Why, it was a new boy and his mother come to see the Doctor! I shall get into a jolly row if the Doctor hears of it; but just you come and take a look at them when they come out, and see if they're not a queer lot?

So up we went, about a dozen of us, to the top of the wall, at Blake's invitation.

'Halfpenny a peep! Only a halfpenny! Only a halfpenny! Halfpenny a peep to see the monkeys fed! Walk up, ladies and gentlemen! Walk up, my little dears, and see the dead donkey and the live lion stuffed with straw! Walk up, and see Dan! in the lion's den!'

Now, you know, twelve boys cannot sit side by side on a wall for long together, without trying to push one another over, and in a few minutes such a struggle began that we could think of nothing but our wish to keep on ourselves and our wish to push every one else off; till we suddenly heard the Doctor's voice close under the wall, sounding very different to what it did when he was speaking to Sir John Roy.

'Come down this moment, you boys! and don't let me ever see you up there again!'

And there he was on the drive, and by his side stood a shabby-looking woman and a boy. She was not a bit like mother, and I did not feel surprised that Blake had made a mistake of thinking that the back-door was her proper place. Of course we had not much time to look at her or at the boy who was with her, for we were all scrambling down the wall as quick as ever we could; but even that minute of scrambling was enough to show me that Hodson was a cad, and I found that the other fellows quite agreed with me in my opinion.

CHAPTER II.

THE first year that Bertie and I were at school we had a great friend named Lawrence Brady, or Larry, as he was always called; but his father came home from sea and took him away with him in the middle of the term before Roy and Hodson came to school, and when he left, both Bertie and I agreed that we could never have any friend at school again, as we should never like any fellow half so much as we did Larry. But when we went back to school after Christmas, and I found that Harry Roy was in the same class and the same dormitory, and was inclined to be chums with me, I did not hold back, for the more I saw of him the more my opinion strengthened that he was a regular brick. He got the nickname of Prince Thingumbob from Clarkson's stupidity, but I always called him Roy, which seemed

to suit him exactly, for it means 'a king,' and I always thought there was something royal about him. He was such a jolly fellow to look at, so tall, and strong, and hearty, holding his head so high and always coming to the front, and taking the lead in everything. He was so quick, too, doing things while other fellows were only thinking of them; and then he never seemed to take any trouble about anything, but to do things easily that other fellows slaved at.

He always stood well in the class without seeming to try to do so, and in the play-ground he soon got to be leader in everything. He was first-rate at football, first-rate at cricket, swam like a fish, and skated like I don't know what. I sometimes wondered if there was anything he could not do. He was a little bit hasty-tempered, for he was proud and would not stand any cheek, but he was just as quick to make it up; and he was not a bit of a bully, he would not lay a finger on the little chaps, though some of them were awfully cheeky, and he would stand up for them if he saw any of the elder fellows bullying them. Of course this made him very popular in the school, and after the day when he gave big Jones a thorough thrashing for bullying little Belton, all the little boys worshipped the ground he stood on, and would have gone through fire and water after him; and so would I, I think. The elder boys liked him too, except Jones, who never forgave him the thrashing, but was too great a coward (as bullies always are) to have it out. Indeed I thought the elder boys liked him too much, for they used to take him away and get him into their room, for he knew a heap about horses and fox-hunting: yes, and racing too; and his father was Sir John Roy. I don't mean to say that the fellows in the sixth liked him because his father was a 'Sir,' I think people learn to be snobs after they leave school; but Sir John was master of the South Blankshire hounds, and his stables were the talk of the country round; and he was a great man on the turf, and was the owner of a famous horse called 'Chanticleer,' who won ever so many races. I always prided myself on knowing a good deal about horses, but I knew nothing at all by the side of Roy, who was so very learned on the subject that very often I did not understand half he said. I remember one day Bertie asking me what was meant by 'a man on the turf,' and Blake, who was standing by, undertook to enlighten him.

'Well, you see, it's a man who undertakes to lose his own and everybody else's money before you can say Jack Robinson. Why, Sir John Roy has lost more thousands than you have halfpence!'

'I thought it was a fine thing to be on the turf!'

'So it is, my infant—awfully fine; and the more money you lose, the finer. That's just the fun of the thing, don't you see!'

Bertie looked puzzled, and Blake went on:—

'Ah! you don't see the point, I expect: it belongs to a higher class of mathematics than you're up to. You must wait till you're in the upper sixth, and have got well over the Asses' Bridge, and then it will all be as clear as day. It's all a question of arithmetic, every bit of it. Let me see, how does it go? You take a man, six horses, six jockeys, a dozen of champagne, ditto swindlers; add them together; and then you begin the subtraction: but I forget how it goes

—first brains, then money, and then honesty, and so on; and the answer you get, if you work it out properly, I am told, is *Ruin!* *Q. e. d.*

Bertie was still looking utterly puzzled, as he always was, with Blake's queer talk.

'And I have been also told,' went on Blake, in a solemn voice, 'that the man who is once on the turf is very soon under it; but I don't know whether this is true. Anyhow, I can tell you how to know a man on the turf: there's no mistaking him, for he has got three hands.'

'Oh, come now,' said Clarkson, 'you're chaffing!'

'Not a bit! You look at Sir John Roy next time he comes, if he's not got a great-coat on, and you'll find he's a right hand, he's a left hand, and (take my word for it) he's a little behindhand.'

So ended Blake's lecture on the turf.

Sometimes Sir John Roy would come to see Harry on his way from hunting, all splashed and stained from head to foot, but looking such a fine, manly old fellow in his scarlet coat (or pink, as Roy made us call it), and velvet hunting-cap, that I could not wonder at Harry being so proud of his father. Sometimes, but not so often, Lady Roy would come in the big yellow carriage; and she would send in for Harry, and stop for about five minutes talking to him, with a languid voice and half-shut eyes. Harry was proud of her, too. She had been a court beauty once; but he did not know what it was to put his arm round her neck and give her a good hug, like I do to mother at home. She found even these few minutes very fatiguing; and when she had given him half a sovereign, and kissed the tips of her dainty kid gloves to him, she would drive away looking quite exhausted.

Hodson was as different from Roy as darkness from light; and the more I saw of him the more my opinion was strengthened that he was a cad. There was something mean and disagreeable about the very look of him.

It was not because Hodson was so ugly that I took a dislike to him—for our old chum, Larry, was terribly ugly, and we liked him all the better for it—but there was something repulsive about him: he had a heavy, doughy-looking face, with weak, blinking eyes; and he had stooping shoulders, and a slouching, slipshod way of walking; and damp, dirty hands, with the nails bitten down to the quick. He always spoke with a sort of a snuffle. There was not one of the boys that took to him; and at first Bertie was so sorry for him, and afraid of his feeling dull and neglected, that he quite made up to him, and used to ask him to come for walks, or join in games in the play-ground: but after a time he gave it up, for he found that Hodson cared as little for his kindness as he did for the other boys' neglect, and that he much preferred to be left to himself, either to his book in the corner of the school-room, or to his solitary walks.

At first we were afraid that Hodson might be put in our dormitory, but we managed to avoid this. Bertie and I still slept in the small dormitory in the west wing, as we had done the first year we were at school; and there were only five beds in that room, and these were filled by Roy, Blake, Clarkson, and ourselves. There was some talk of moving Clarkson after Christmas, as he had a habit of walking in his

sleep, which did not make him a pleasant companion at night. We did not object to this, as we none of us liked him much; but when we found that Hodson was to take his place we appealed to Mr. Hutton, the master, who slept in our wing, and he managed to have it arranged for Clarkson to stay where he was, and Hodson was, to our great rejoicing, put into another dormitory.

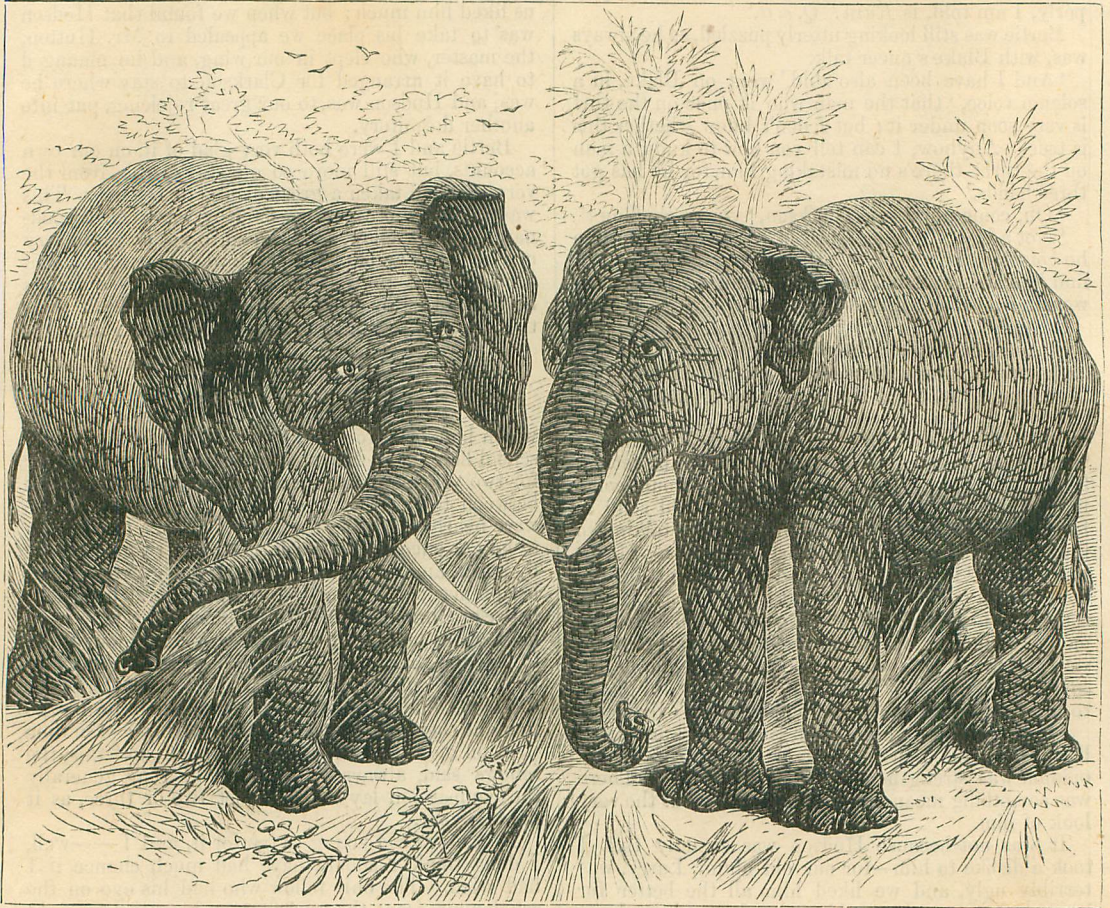
Bertie and I were both very glad of it, on our own accounts, but still more so on Roy's, who from the very first had taken a great dislike to Hodson. This was all the more curious as Roy was such a good-natured, easy fellow, and seemed to get on with every one he came across; but there was something about Hodson that no fellow could like. 'He's such a horrid cad,' Roy used to say: 'I can't think what the Doctor was thinking of to let him come here.'

CHAPTER III.

Now at Highmore School there was an exhibition, which had been founded by the master who had the school before Dr. May. It was fifteen pounds a-year for two years, and was open to any boys in the school between the ages of twelve and fourteen, and these were nearly always in the fourth class. It was only to be got once in two years. It was to go entirely by merit, and to the boy who got the greatest number of marks both for lessons and general behaviour between Christmas and Midsummer, when the examination was held. Of course it was a very jolly thing to get, and there were plenty of boys who would have liked well enough to have it, and after Christmas there were ever so many in the fourth form who thought they would have a try for it; but as the time went on one after another dropped off, and this, the fellows said, always happened, and that generally the competition lay between just two or three, as it did this year.

Bertie was too young to try for it, and I—well, I don't think I should have had much chance if I had tried. The only fellow who had his eye on the scholarship from the very first, and never lost sight of it, was Hodson; and, indeed, I think he came to Highmore on purpose to get it. He was put into the fourth class, where Roy and I were also, and though he did not take a very good place at first, still he began gradually and steadily to work his way up: for though he was not half so bright and quick as Roy and some of the other fellows, what he wanted in quickness he made up in downright hard work. There was no denying that he was a very industrious fellow, and a regular sap at his books. As for Roy, I don't think he ever thought of the scholarship at first. It was no trouble to him to keep up in the class, and as long as he kept a tolerable place he did not care to better it; but when Hodson's hard work began to tell, and he made his way slowly up and passed Roy by, Roy's mettle rose.

'Do you think I will be beaten by a fellow like that?' said Roy to me one day; and I thought what a hero he looked, with his cheeks flushed, and his eyes sparkling, and his lips pressed together, and his head up. 'I wouldn't mind if it were you, Tom, you lazy beggar! but to be beaten by that snuffling cad is more than I can stand.'



THE ELEPHANTS.

INDICUS.

WELL, Africanus, so we meet at last!'
I did not think your deserts were so vast.

AFRICANUS.

'What, Indicus? I see your face with joy:
How fares your wife and family, my boy?
Come, shake my trunk—proboscis, I should say:
One learns such slang!—forgive me, cousin, pray.'

INDICUS.

'There's nothing to forgive. But now, I see,
I heard the truth—you're not so big as me.'

AFRICANUS.

'True, I allow; but may these tusks be bone,
If I can't show an ear far better grown!'

INDICUS.

'That I must grant; but I've four nails, you see:
You smaller Africans can boast but three.'

'Ah,' I said, 'you think it safe to say you wouldn't mind me. I've too good a view out of window generally to come anywhere near you.'

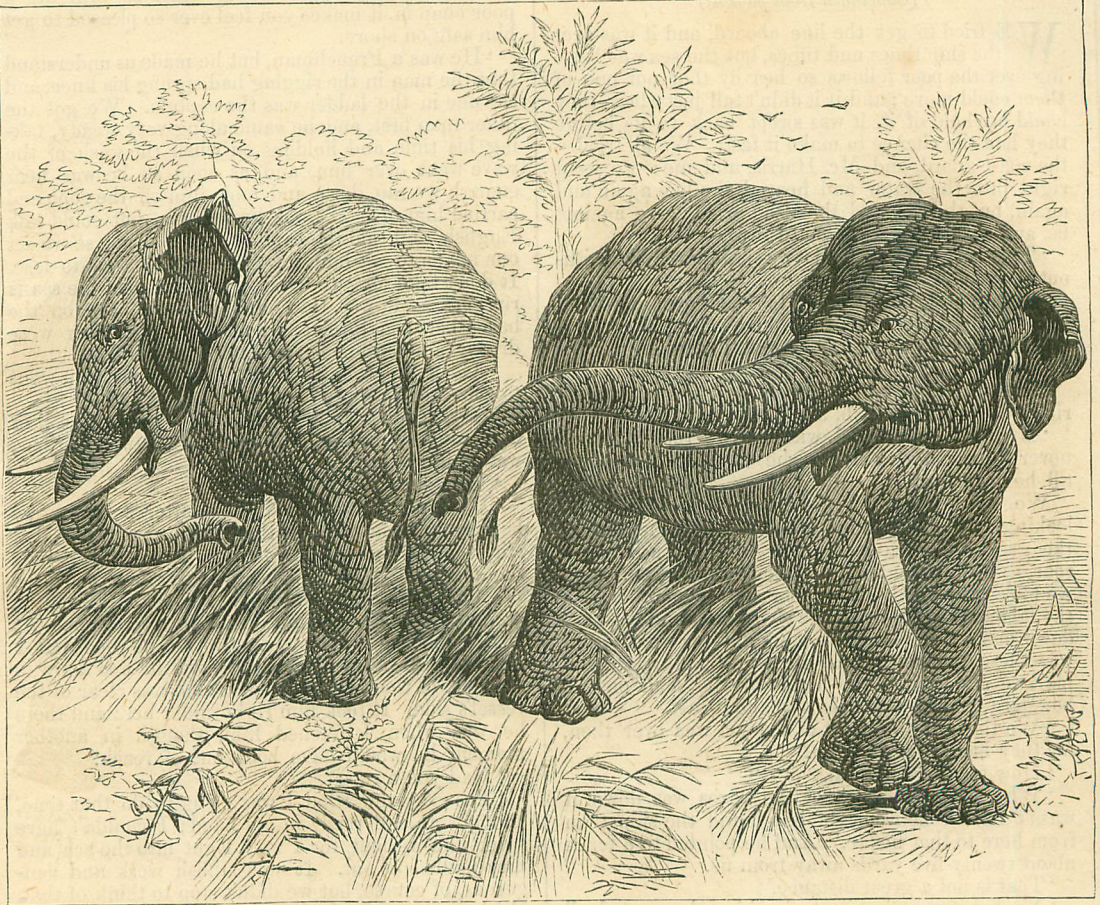
Roy laughed. 'I'm not chaffing, though: I'll keep that fellow under, see if I don't; and what's more, I've half a mind to go in for the scholarship.'

And the next day Roy was at the top of the class.

'Tom,' he said to me, 'when I make up my mind to a thing I do it. It's always the way with the Roys, and I mean to get the scholarship. It's not the money, I don't care the snap of a finger for that, but I won't let Hodson beat me.'

From that day a struggle began, which grew sharper and more severe as the time passed on, and though Roy had found it easy enough at first, I think he felt he had found his match at last. He had cared very little at first about his place in the class; he was much more anxious to get on at football than at Virgil, and to be first in the playground than in the class-room: but his competition with Hodson seemed now to take the place of every other interest.

(To be continued.)



AFRICANUS.

'Well, well, your vaunts forbear, dear Indicus—
No other creatures can compare with us.
They say the whale can boast a wider girth,
But we are, doubtless, monarchs of the earth.
No other proboscidiens are known:
Don't let us wrangle, for we stand alone.'

INDICUS.

'True, very true; what other creature goes
With forty thousand muscles in his nose?'

AFRICANUS.

'One that can gather grass, uproot a tree——'

INDICUS.

'Lift a great cannon, sweep aside a foe——'

AFRICANUS.

'Pick up a pin, or lay a giant low——'

INDICUS.

'And good to eat—the epicures say so!'

AFRICANUS.

'O wondrous nose!'

INDICUS.

'Let's blow a mighty blast,'

BOTH.

'Till lions tremble at the sound aghast.'

AFRICANUS.

'Alas, my brother! heard you not the gun?
Peril is near us—we are both undone!
Our blast has sure betrayed our hiding-place;
Go where you like, but at no tortoise pace.
Hush!—let's decamp—direct a letter soon,
To "Africus, the Mountains of the Moon."

INDICUS.

'Good-bye, dear cousin; we will meet again,
When Elephants have learned to do like men—
Lie, quarrel, buy and sell, build towns and ships;
Then shall those two-legged tyrants feel our whips.'

AFRICANUS.

'Aha, dear Indicus, that will be fun!
But let us part—there goes another gun!'

G. S. O.

ISAAC HUNTER'S DREAM.

(Concluded from page 4.)

WE tried to get the line aboard, and it was over the ship times and times, but the sea was beating over the poor fellows so heavily that not one of them could move; and if it didn't fall just where they could lay hold of it, it was swept back to us before they had the chance to make it fast. We all tried—the coast-guard, and Mr. Harris, and me; we went right into the water and heaved the line again and again, but the sea and the dead wind were against us, and at last the coast-guard says,—

'This isn't a bit of good: we shall never do it without the rocket.'

'Then you had best be off to Sea Town and fetch it,' says Mr. Harris; and the man was off almost before the words were out of his mouth, running as hard as he could go.

But it was over two miles to Sea Town, and terrible steep hills to climb, and I says to Mr. Harris,—

'If they aren't saved without the rocket, they'll never be saved with it, for she won't hold together till he gets back.'

We stood for a minute getting our breath, and looking at the poor ship; all of a quiver she was, as the great rollers fell over her with a crash and a roar, as if they wanted to swallow her up, and then we took up the coil. I had one and he another, and the labourers held on to the shore end, and we went down again; and stuck to it we did, for we knew it was the only chance, and at last Mr. Harris threw his line almost into the hands of the man on the bowsprit, and he was able to make it fast.

'We thought the worst of the job was over then, for they hadn't far to come.'

'How far?' I inquired.

'Why, when the wash of the waves was down, it wasn't farther between the beach and the ship than from here to that hedge.' And he pointed to a fence about twenty-five yards away from us.

'That is not a great distance.'

'No, but it was too much for him: he started all right, and we looked to see him going along with his hands and feet caught over the rope; but whether he was beat with cold, or whether he lost his head, I don't know, for he had hardly gone four feet when he loosed his hold and fell into one of the biggest waves that had come over us that night.'

'We made sure he was gone then. I wouldn't have given a halfpenny to a thousand pounds for the chance of his life,' continued Isaac, getting excited as he recalled that narrow escape. 'We got him, though: for the next wave brought him in, and I ran to pick him up before the suck took him under: but I ran a bit too far, for the beach gave way under me just as I gripped him, and the water got hold of us both and washed us out to sea. It was a bad job for us then, and we were as near drowning as men could be; for we couldn't have been saved anyhow if the next roller hadn't caught us and brought us in on the beach again. We got out somehow, Mr. Harris helping us; and then we fell to and shook hands all round, for we felt as glad as could be. Mr. Harris had given up the sailor for lost, and me too, and, as he said, that would have been the worst job of all,

with eight children and the missus all looking to me. Besides, when you've set your heart on bringing a poor chap in, it makes you feel ever so pleased to get him safe on shore.'

'He was a Frenchman, but he made us understand that the man in the rigging had sprung his knee, and the one in the ladder was the captain. We got the other man first, and he came along very steady, taking his time and holding on when the wash of the wave went over him, and as soon as he was near enough we ran down and took him off the rope and carried him up. He was French too, but could talk English, and said the captain wasn't dead; so we set our minds to get him, for there was no time to lose. It don't take long to break up a ship when the sea is running as it was then, and she had been on the beach between three and four hours, for they were driven in about one o'clock, the men thought.'

'About the time your first dream made you want to come to the shore?'

'Yes, very near the same time. I thought of it in a minute when the man spoke. It was curious, wasn't it?'

'Very curious!'

'Well, ma'am,' resumed Isaac, after a pause, 'we had pretty near given up the captain, for he wouldn't stir, though we shouted to him, and his own men shouted to him, for I suppose it was half an hour. He hung there by his hands and feet, a thin, little, atomy of a chap, looking just like a skeleton. At last he did make a move and got to the rope, but I guessed he'd never come across, and he was down in the suck of the sea almost before he was clear of the vessel's side. It took him right under her; and there he was when I fetched him, though in another moment he would have been out of reach.'

'Had you a rope?'

'Yes; I knew what I was going to do that time, and got an end ready in my hand; I couldn't have saved him without, for I went right into the sea and they hauled us out. It was stiffish work and dangerous, of course, but we didn't stop to think of that. When we got him in he looked as if he were dead; he was white and cold as a corpse, and we couldn't feel his heart beat or see a sign of life in him. There was no more on the ship; we had got them all then; so we wrapped a coat round him, and I picked him up and carried him over the cliff. As we got to the top we could see the coast-guard come racing down the side of Golden Cap one after the other, trying which could get to us first; but they would have been too late anyway, for just then a great sea came rolling in and covered the ship, which lay below at our feet, we saw the mast quiver and shake, and topple over, and when the wash went back it took the timbers with it, for the vessel was all to pieces, plank from plank, regularly beaten to bits by the weight of the waves.'

'And the captain?'

'He came round after a bit, for Mr. Harris had run on in front, and was back again with a jug of hot tea, before I got him half way to the farm. It did them all good, that tea did, and when we came to the house Mrs. Harris had fires and hot blankets, and hot water, and everything she could think of to make them comfortable; and after a good rest none of them were much the worse.'

'How had they been driven ashore?' I asked. 'How had it come about?'

'They had lost their rudder and been drifting about in the bay all the Saturday afternoon; but the weather being thick they had not been seen by the look-out at the station. When they struck they had climbed up in the rigging; but seeing how close in shore they were, they tried to get on the bowsprit: but one having his knee hurt could not get along, and the captain was dead beat and could not move; and the boy, the only other sailor aboard, was washed off as he was trying to get to the bowsprit. I suppose, seeing that made the others afraid to try. He was drowned, the poor lad was; his body came in a few days after, and his mates stopped with Mr. Harris till they had seen him buried.'

'Did Mr. Harris take them all in?'

'Yes, he wouldn't hear of their going anywhere else. He said he had helped to save them and they should stay with him till they could go home.'

'The Roman Catholic priest and the Squire came to see them, and it seemed funny to us as couldn't understand to hear them talk, all together sometimes, and so fast! you wondered how they could do it. And looked so pitiful they did! Every one was kind to them, and they went home after a bit.'

'What was the name of the ship?'

'Isaac told me, but I could not catch it.'

'It means "Messenger," anyway; perhaps you will know the words from that. I wondered what was the meaning and looked it out in the Dictionary,' he said, "'Courier?" is that it?'

'Ah, that's it! I can't say it right, but that's what men called it.'

'And what was the date? I forgot to ask you.'

'The twenty-fourth of November, Sunday morning. It was about three o'clock when I saw the wreck first, and it was just after six when we got the men up to Mr. Harris's. I think that's all; but it was very queer, that dream was. They'd have been drowned; and no one known about it till the bodies came ashore, if I hadn't been sent down to the eastward that night.'

'What do you mean by "sent?" you went of your own accord,' I said, anxious to draw him out.

'Well, yes, in a way,' he replied, pushing back his cap and rubbing his head; 'but I couldn't bide at home, though it did seem nothing but foolishness to turn out of bed at that time in the morning and go to the eastward for a dream. But it was more than a dream, that was, though what it was I can't say. But I was sent to the shore to save those poor fellows, that's certain.'

'Do you often go to that part of the shore? had you been there lately?' I asked, trying to see if any link of association with the particular spot would account for his dream.

'No, I don't suppose I had been across the bridge for nearly a twelvemonth; my boat lies on the other side, and I hadn't troubled about the pots nor nothing. There's no accounting for it, that I know of: I was sent, that's what it was.'

And as we sat there among the potatoes listening to the story it seemed as if indeed he was right; and that this strong man, used to perils by sea, able to face an emergency and to do good service amid the waves, had been sent to the rescue of the *Courrier's*

crew as she lay on the beach, being pounded to pieces beneath the mighty waves of a south-west gale.

After making arrangements with Hunter to row me up the coast on my homeward journey in the afternoon, we went down to the beach, following the Upper Sea Lane by which he had gone on the night of the wreck.

'Did he tell the story as you have heard it before?' I asked F——.

'Yes,' she replied; 'it was just the same.'

We sat down on the shingle, and while F—— made friends with a flock of children in serge frocks and white linen hats, who were building castles on the sand, I put down the particulars of the story we had just heard, fearing that some of the details might escape my memory. The children were much interested in my proceedings, and listened attentively while I read over my notes to F—— for correction.

In the afternoon, as Hunter rowed me to the eastward on the top of the tide, we passed the spot where the wreck took place.

'It was just there,' he said, pointing to a little indentation in the line of blue lias cliff, which rose about thirty feet above a bank of shingle. A little wooden hut—the coast-guard's shelter in bad weather—stood just above, and a rough flight of steps led up from the shore.

The swell broke there with a heavy thud even on that calm afternoon, when there was scarcely a ripple on the sea; and as the rattle of the falling pebbles came across to us, I thought of the brave service which had been done there last November, when the waves were sweeping in with all their fury, and tearing down the beach before their resistless force.

Suddenly Isaac took off his cap and waved it with a cheery hail to a man who had appeared on the cliff.

'Who is that?' I asked, as the greeting was returned.

'That's Mr. Harris.'

So there were the two heroes together, just at the scene of their gallant rescue.

As we went on our course Hunter told me of the handsome gold watches which the people of the neighbourhood had given to Mr. Harris and himself in recognition of their services.

'Did you have any medals from the Society?' I inquired.

'No: our clergyman and some of the gentlemen wrote about it, and a paper was sent down with questions to be filled in; but there was one asking if any witnesses were present, which they left blank, though the labourers who held the rope witnessed it all, and we suppose, owing to that mistake, we never had the medals. But, we don't take no account of that, for we did not do it for that, though I dare say our missuses would like us to have them.'

That is the story of Isaac Hunter's dream and its results. I do not pretend to account for, or to explain it, and I have simply related the facts almost in his own words. In these days, when there seems to be a growing disbelief in all those wonders and signs which cannot be explained by the laws of nature, it is well to record an incident which seems to teach us that God does sometimes work otherwise than by the action of those laws for the welfare and preservation of His people.

C. H. B.



Trying to get the line on board.

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Chatterbox.



A Wonderful Cat. By HARRISON WEIR.



A WONDERFUL CAT.

THREE years ago I had a lovely kitten given to me. Her fur was of a beautiful blue-grey colour marked with glossy black stripes, according to the most approved zebra or tiger fashion. She was so very pretty that she was named 'Pret,' and was the wisest, most loving, and dainty pussy that ever crossed my path. When Pret was very young I fell ill with a nervous fever. She missed me immediately in my accustomed place, sought for me, and placed herself at my door until she found a chance of getting into my room, and began at once to try her little best to amuse me with her frisky kitten tricks and pussy-cat attentions. But soon finding that I was too ill to play with her, she placed herself beside me, and at once established herself as head nurse. In this capacity few human beings could have exceeded her in watchfulness, or manifested more affectionate regard. It was truly wonderful to note how soon she learned to know the different hours at which I ought to take medicine or nourishment; and during the night, if my attendant were asleep, she would call her, and if she could not awaken her without such extreme measures, she would gently nibble the nose of the sleeper, which means never failed to produce the desired effect. Having thus achieved her purpose, Miss Pret would watch attentively the preparation of whatever was needed, and then come, and with a gentle purr-purr announce it to me. The most marvellous part of the matter was, her never being five minutes wrong in her calculations of the true time, even amid the stillness and darkness of the night. But who shall say by what means this little being was enabled to measure the fleeting moments, and by the aid of what power did she connect the lapse of time with the needful attentions of a nurse and her charge? Surely we have here something more than reason?—*Routledge's 'Illustrated Natural History,' by the Rev. J. G. Wood.*

A GOOD DEED REWARDED.

DURING the war which the Empress Catherine of Russia carried on in 1764 against the Turks, a regiment of hussars, composed in great part of foreigners and a certain number of Poles, encamped near a Turkish fortress, which was soon to be attacked. A young and brave Russian lieutenant received one day an order to start with some thirty hussars to seek forage in the neighbourhood: they had several skirmishes during the day with the enemy on the way, and on both sides there were dead and wounded. In the evening he advised his soldiers to be not only on their guard, but also to explore all round to see if there was any wounded man belonging to the army who needed help.

On skirting the edge of a forest they heard from a ditch the plaintive voice of a human being. Two hussars got off from their horses and tried to find out to whom the voice belonged, whether to one of

their men or to an enemy. Suddenly the two hussars burst into loud fits of laughter: the officer approached the place, and saw in the ditch an old Jew, of venerable aspect.

'Help an unfortunate old man who is not an enemy, and take pity on his sufferings!' cried the Jew, in the Polish language.

The lieutenant ordered his soldiers, who were still laughing, to be silent, and he had the Jew pulled out of the ditch, and gave him his own flask filled with wine to quench his thirst. This refreshing drink revived the exhausted old man, and gave him enough strength to relate his adventures.

'Having followed the army for business of the Russian government, which had been entrusted to me, I tried this morning to penetrate into the Turkish camp to obtain some important information. At the end of a combat I was pursued by the Russian dragoons, who took me for a spy, robbed, and wounded me. In fear I hid myself in this ditch, the sufferings and loss of blood so exhausted my strength that it was impossible for me to raise myself.'

Some hussars objected, that one ought not to believe this old dog, and that the shortest way would be to kill him; but the officer was not of that opinion, and commanded them to be silent. He chose two soldiers, who seemed to him the most pitiful, and gave the old man into their charge, with the order to await his return.

By this time the night had come on, and the wounded man becoming weaker could only be moved with great care. The officer returning after two hours' absence at once alighted, and to show his men an example of kindness, he raised the Jew on his own horse and led him to his tent. There he bestowed on him every care, and when he was entirely cured he gave him some money, and had him sent on under a good escort to a safe place.

At the moment for departure the old man, deeply moved, cried,—'Sir, you have rendered me a very great service; you have done more than a son or a brother could have done. How can I show you my gratitude? May the God of my fathers bless you, and send you—should you find yourself in misfortune—a deliverer as charitable as you have been to me.'

The young officer declined all thanks and quitted the old man, wishing him a happy return to his friends.

Soon after this a part of the Russian army, chiefly cavalry, advanced upon the Turkish territory. The regiment of our lieutenant was engaged in many combats; during one of these he distinguished himself so well that the general sent for him the next day, appointed him captain, and entrusted to him the command of the squadron in which he had served till now with so much glory, and which had just lost its chief.

The officers, his comrades, had seen his rapid promotion with envy. So once after a surprise from the enemy he was abandoned by those who ought to have followed him, and in a bold attack he was wounded and made prisoner. In those times the most deplorable fate awaited those who fell into the hands of the Turks. They were first deprived of their liberty, and if the Sultan did not attach them to his person,

they were sold as slaves. Such was the fate of our unfortunate captain; when he was cured of his wounds he was sent to Adrianople, where he became the personal slave of a rich Turk named Ali.

He was set to superintend Ali's stables, and he took care to avoid displeasing his master, who, however, could not restrain himself from ill-treating him. Thus one day Ali brought home one of his favourite horses, which he had unskilfully ridden and lamed. He said that this accident was the fault of the superintendent, and he had him thrown into a dungeon, where for many days he endured hunger and thirst.

One day our prisoner was obliged to follow Ali to a town, a day's march from Adrianople, where a large horse-fair was being held. Turks, Servians, Armenians, Poles, Jews, and Russians, met each other in the narrow streets, in the shops, as well as in the market, which were all crammed with merchandise.

Ali made a great many large purchases, and was preparing on the morning of the fifth day to return to Adrianople, when an old Polish Jew stopped before our captain. After he had asked his name, and the date when he was officer in the Russian service, he slipped a note into his hand and departed as quickly as he could. The writing contained these words in the Polish language: 'Be patient a little longer, and your most ardent desire will be accomplished.' The captain did not know what to think of this strange incident.

'Who then, in my sad condition, can think of me? Who, then, would seek to console me and to cheer up my courage? Is it perhaps one of my old comrades, a prisoner like myself, but more favoured by fate, who seeks to deliver me?'

At his return from the fair he was sent back to prison. His position became more and more painful. Hope, which had been awakened, gradually vanished, and in his despair he thought he must have been in a dream, or that the messenger who had given him the note must have made a mistake.

One night, after a day of labour and fatigue, the captain had thrown himself earlier than usual upon his wretched bed, when suddenly Ali, accompanied by his steward, the vile servant of his caprices and passions, entered his cell and addressed him thus:—

'You see, Christian dog, I ought to chastise you again for your idleness, but you are not worthy of my anger; I do not wish to see you before my eyes any longer, and I have sold you to another master who is well worthy of you,' added he, with a malicious smile. 'Be off, and follow him at once!'

A carriage was ready in the court-yard, and the captain was forced to get in with the steward, accompanied by two other slaves, and they rolled on all night. At break of day the travellers reached an inn where two Servians awaited them, who, without speaking a word, received the captain from the hands of his conductor, and led him without stopping to the banks of the Danube. The Servians avoided all conversation with him, and only replied by monosyllables to the questions put to them, which made it very difficult for him to understand. After having crossed the river they continued to travel without stopping, and only on the third day they reached a town where the Servians declared they wished to rest.

They had treated the captain, although *without* speaking a word to him, with a certain respect, and it was the same in the house where they alighted.

On entering the room which was destined for him, he there found arranged with the greatest care a cloak and hat like those he formerly wore, which denoted a delicate attention from the host. The Servian's servant invited him to put on these clothes, and went away.

Soon after the door was opened, and he saw enter in his festival attire the old Jew whose life he had saved.

'May the God of my fathers be praised,' cried the old man, 'that I am able to do for you as you have done for me! Be welcome in the house of your servant, for whom you had so much compassion.'

As he spoke these words of thankfulness large tears rolled down upon the white beard of the venerable Israelite. At the same instant, men of different ages, women with their children, and young girls, entered the room, and expressed to him their lively gratitude for having helped their aged parent.

The officer then learned from his host how he had been informed that his deliverer had been wounded and made prisoner by the Turks, and he had at once hastened to fly to his help in order to deliver him.

'For a long time I sought for you,' said the Jew, 'on the Turkish territory, where I have been known for a number of years as a trader. I could not obtain the least information which could give me any traces of you. I saw you at last in the horse-market of Z—, with the rich Ali of Adrianople, and I soon found out from his people that you were his slave, and that he treated you with great harshness. I was obliged to be very prudent if I wished to save you, knowing that Ali was a cunning and very bad man. He had denied the faith of his fathers, and owed his riches and power to lies and cheating. There only remained to me one resource, and that was to inform you of your approaching deliverance by some words of writing which I charged one of my faithful servants to give to you, in order that you might summon up patience and courage for a little while longer. Some weeks later, in order not to awaken the suspicions of Ali, I followed you to Adrianople, and entered into a business which put me in communication with him. I perceived some profits might be made which tempted him, and I decided to ask him to give me in exchange for them one of his most robust slaves. Ali made his slaves cross the court before me, you were of the number. On seeing you my heart beat as if it would break. But with all the calmness which was in my power I fixed my choice on you.'

'That one,' said Ali, with a scowl of hatred, 'is a proud, bad fellow, who must be tamed by severe discipline. I am obliged to treat him as a furious horse. I shall keep him.'

'That one, or none at all,' I replied. He gave way and the bargain was made, and I told him where he was to place you in the hands of my people. I took leave of him, bearing away in writing the promise that you were to join me in three days. May the God of my fathers be praised thousands and thousands of times that He has preserved my life to pay my debt towards you! Look on my



The old Jew in the Ditch.

house as yours; command, we are at your service, myself and my family; dispose also of all my goods. When your strength is entirely re-established, I shall be happy to take you back to your camp myself.'

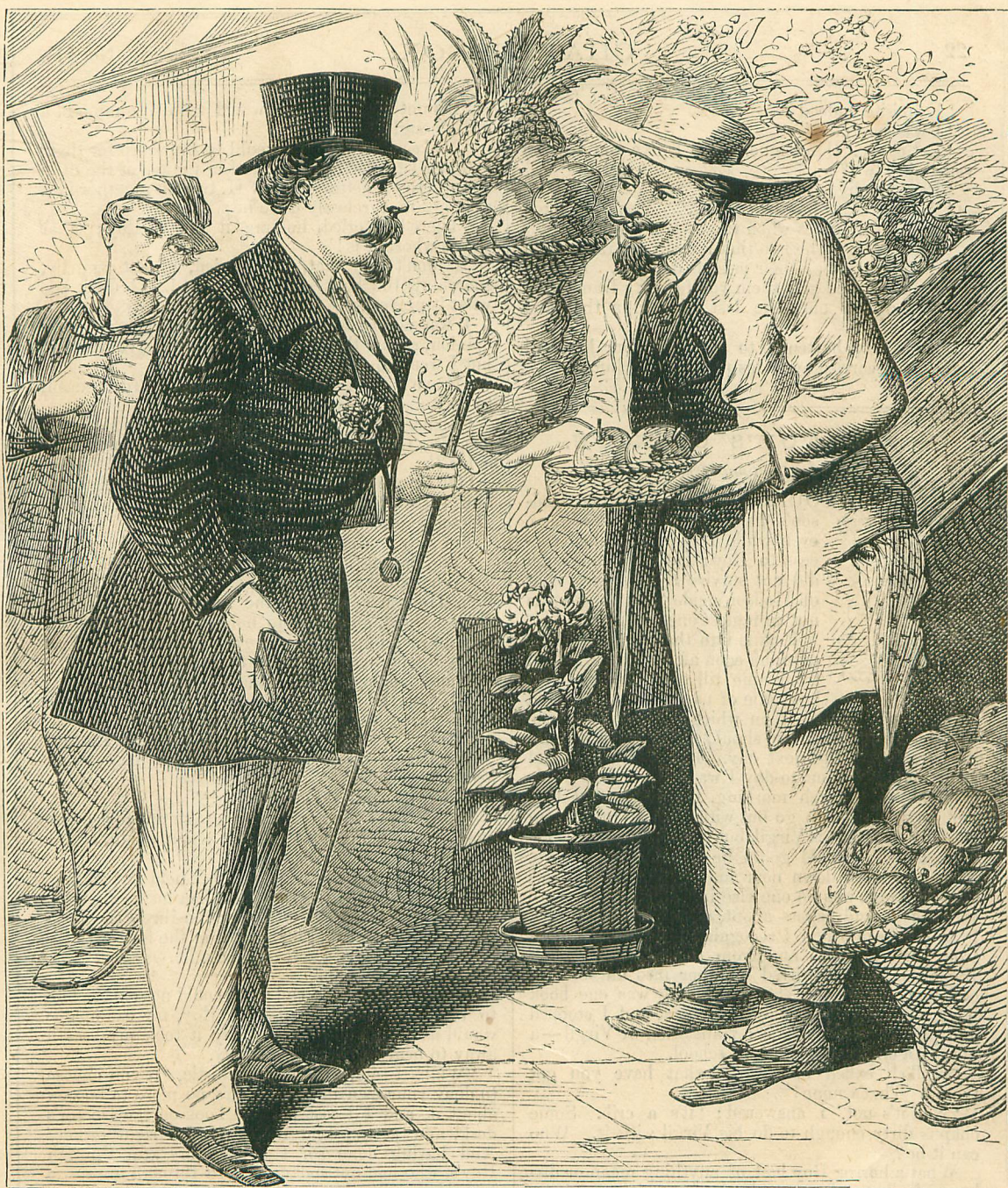
The grateful old man kept his word; he conducted his benefactor back into the midst of his old comrades, who, having repented of their evil feelings towards him, received him with every token of joy.

E. H. C.

THE BANKER AND THE PEACHES.

IT is the scarcity of things which causes their high price. This the fruit-merchant on the boulevards of Paris knew well, who on the 6th of January, 1869, saw one of our rich bankers enter his shop. The banker wished that evening to give a great dinner to some of his rich friends. He wished a costly dessert.

He searched everywhere, and in the fruiterer's shop on the boulevards he found some peaches.



There were not many, it is true—only three magnificent ones.

‘How much are those three peaches?’ asked the banker.

‘Three hundred francs, sir.’

‘That is much too dear!’

‘I defy you to find others. As to the price, you would give a thousand francs if you believed that M. Rothschild wanted them.’

‘What folly! M. Rothschild has such beautiful

greenhouses that he cannot envy anybody. Three hundred francs! It is enormous! If I was only sure that they were good—’

‘Is that all? We will share the first that comes, then.’

And taking one of the three peaches before the banker could stop him, he opened it, and gave half to that personage, who tasted it as a connoisseur. He ate the other half himself with delight.

‘Well, what do you say?’

'Exquisite, indeed!'

'I was sure of it.'

'Let us see. How much shall I give you for the remaining two?'

'Four hundred francs.'

'What! Four hundred francs? You only asked three hundred francs when there were three!'

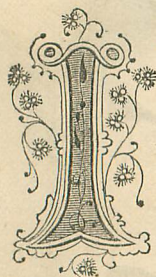
'Exactly so. The two that remain are rarer than they were just now: their price is doubled. If there were ten, I would give them you for fifty francs. If we eat another one, the last will be a thousand francs.'

The banker hastened to give the four hundred francs, and carried away his peaches in triumph.

E. H. C.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 12.)



COULD not help admiring Hodson's hard work and steadiness, even while I heartily wished success to Roy; but my admiration did not survive the discovery that on Hodson's side the struggle was not an honest one.

I came into the schoolroom one morning soon after nine. We had from nine till ten as play-time; but some of us were often obliged to make up the time then which we had wasted the evening before, when we should have been preparing our lessons for the next day. I almost always had something to do, but to-day I was free, and as it was a fine, bright March morning, I came to find Roy and persuade him to go out with me. I found him working away at his Virgil, but he said he had nearly done, and if I would go on he would catch me up. However, I sat down near him to wait till he was ready. There was no one else in the room, but there were books and papers about, and close by were a heap of books which I recognised as Hodson's, both from their dirtiness and from his initials, 'R. H.,' Richard Hodson, twisted together into all sorts of odd monograms and shapes. There was one book lying on the floor close by Roy's feet, and I stooped and picked it up. It was a translation of Virgil—a key, or a crib, as we call it at school.

'Hullo!' called out Roy, 'what have you got there? That's mine!'

'No, it's not,' I answered; 'it's a crib. Some chap is dirty enough to do his Virgil with it. Who can it be?'

What a horror Roy had of anything mean or dishonest! The colour was beginning to burn crimson in his face as I held up the book to show him. Mother told me once that a gentleman feels almost as much shame at seeing anything wrong done as if he had done it himself, and it seemed so indeed with Roy.

'I'll tell you what,' I went on, 'I'll take it up and lay it on the Doctor's desk, so that he may see it as soon as he comes in. But stop; let's see if there's any name in it.'

There was no name on the fly-leaf.

'It's not likely a fellow would write his name in a crib, though.'

'No,' said Roy, 'they would be too sharp for that.'

Then I turned the page, and on the top of the title-page were the letters R. and H. twisted together in a monogram, carelessly done in pencil.

'There!' I cried, holding it out to Roy; 'that shows whose it is!'

'I don't see that,' Roy cried, almost angrily, snatching the book out of my hand. 'I don't see what it proves.'

I was almost ashamed at being so quick with my opinion, seeing that Roy was so slow to be convinced; but I went on,—

'Prove? Why it proves R. H., Richard Hodson, to be worse than I took him for.'

'Richard Hodson! Ah! so it is—R. H.,' Roy said, dropping the book out of his hand. 'Do you think it is his?'

'Of course it is. Whose else? It would serve him right if I put it, initials and all, under the Doctor's nose. Have you done, Roy?'

For Roy was collecting his books.

'Yes,' he said; 'now for our walk.'

'What shall I do with the crib?' I asked, but just then Hodson came into the schoolroom. He was short-sighted, and used to hold a book close to his nose in reading, and he came across the room and sat down by his heap of books, taking them up one by one and looking at the names on the back, and I stood, with the crib in my hand, watching him. He did not seem to miss it, but began writing.

'Hullo!' I said; 'there's one missing, isn't there?'

He looked up at me, smearing his inky finger across his cheek.

'Eh?' he said. 'One missing?'

'Yes, this is yours; and if you take my advice you won't be in a hurry to leave it about again, or the Doctor may catch sight of it.'

He had taken the book, which I held out to him, and looked at the title-page, and then his face grew a dull sort of purple all over, and he threw the book down on the desk and looked me in the face with his blinking, weak eyes, and told me a lie.

'It's not my book.'

Well, he was only a cad; one could not expect him to feel like a gentleman—like Roy, for example—would have felt; but I must say it took my breath away to hear him say it so boldly.

'Well!' I said, with a long whistle, 'if you choose to deny your own initials, there's no more to be said about it, and I'll just put the book on the Doctor's desk, and perhaps he may find the right owner.' And having done so, I slipped my arm through Roy's, who had not spoken a word through my scene with Hodson, and we walked out together.

I was boiling over with indignation, and I could not understand Roy taking it so quietly.

'My dear fellow,' he said, 'I always knew he was a blackguard, so I am not surprised at anything he does.'

'Well,' I said, 'the Doctor won't take it so quietly when he finds the book.'

'Find it! Not he! Do you think that book is on the desk now? If you wanted the Doctor to find it you should not have left Hodson alone in the room with it. Ah, Tom, you're not half sharp!'

'Well, anyhow, he knows what I think of him.'

'Look there!' said Roy; 'there he goes across the playground. Shall I just run back and see if the book is still there?'

'Let me.'

'No, I will,' said Roy, and was off like a shot.

When he came back I asked, 'Is it there?'

'No, it's not there now.' And we both laughed at the strange disappearance.

I wondered how Hodson would like to meet us after our discovery, but he was just the same as ever. He was always so sheepish and awkward that it was nothing new to see him so, but I looked sharply at him when the time for construing came, and I fancied that he kept his eyes from meeting mine when he went up above Roy. It was easy enough to understand now how he could do it so swimmingly. Poor Roy lost several places that day; he came to shocking grief towards the end, and I almost thought that I even should not have made some of the mistakes that he did, but I would rather have gone down in the class with him than up with Hodson.

CHAPTER IV.

I DID not speak of our discovery of Hodson's crib to any one but Bertie, and Roy never said anything more about it, but it was very often on the tip of my tongue when the other fellows were talking of Hodson, saying that he would beat Roy out and out, and that he would win at a canter. But I did not wish to be a sneak, so I kept my thoughts to myself. Only Bertie and I disliked Hodson more than ever; indeed, I think Bertie almost disliked him more than I did, and it seemed to me the more I disliked Hodson the more we liked and admired Roy.

You know that Highmore was near the sea, three miles from Saltby and about two from Seacliff, a little fishing-village on the cliff. But the sea came nearer to us than that, for the little bay where we used to bathe was only about a mile and a half from us. In the winter there was not much to attract us down by the sea, unless, indeed, there had been a storm, and the shore was strewn with thick masses of brown sea-weed, with all sorts of odd sea-creatures, great, flabby jelly-fishes, and prickly star-fishes, and hopping white shrimps, and lively little black crabs.

Well, to come back to what I was saying, we did not go down to the shore nearly as much in the cold weather, when there was skating and football and paper-hunts to keep us inland; but as the spring came on we went more to the little bay. Bertie and I had a lot of little boats, cut out by our old friend Larry, and we used to take them down to sail them in the pools left among the rocks by the tide as it went down. Roy was interested in this at first, and used to come down with us sometimes, but after a little time he got taken up with something else, and Bertie and I went alone. We generally had the bay to ourselves, for it was some way along the shore to Saltby, and so beyond the reach of most of the visitors there; and besides this, it was not 'the season' at Saltby, and most of the lodgings were empty. However, one day, only about a week before the Easter holidays began, we were just in the middle of an exciting race between two little boats, when we

heard some one coming along the sands from Saltby, and saw a nurse-girl pushing a perambulator. We were too much engrossed to take any notice of her, but she stopped and watched us and our boats for some minutes, saying, 'Oh, my!' when one of the boats capsized, and then she went on towards Seacliff.

We were just preparing to go back to Highmore, to be back in time for the calling over before tea, when we saw the girl and perambulator coming back, the girl looking about on the beach and the child crying. It was a perambulator with a long foot to it, and the child was lying down in it on its back, and the cry that came from it was so shrill that we went towards them to see what was the matter.

'There, there!' the girl was saying; 'it's no great loss for sure.'

At this the child only redoubled her sobs, and the words that came out now and then were quite unintelligible.

'Hullo!' said I, 'have you lost something?'

It was a little girl about five years old in the perambulator, and when I spoke she uncovered such a little wan, wistful, tear-stained face, and stretched out two such little thin hands, that I am sure it went to my heart, and Bertie's too; for we have a little sister Edie at home, rosy and fat and merry, and as unlike the odd little creature as night to day.

'Have you seen her?' said the child, while the girl grumbled something about its being nothing to make such a fuss about.

'Seen who?'

'Why, my Cowsie, to be sure!'

'Your what?' I was blundering out, when Bertie, who is always quicker to see people's meaning than I am, interrupted—'Have you lost her, then?'

'Yes,' said the child; 'I had put her to sleep by my side. She always gets sleepy, you know, if we go far; and when I looked she was gone!' And the child's face puckered up again for a cry.

'Never mind,' says Bertie, valiantly; 'we'll soon find her. She must have dropped out as you came along, and no one has been along here besides you, so no one can have stolen her.'

'It's not worth any one's stealing,' grumbled the girl.

But though no one had passed along the shore, there was something that had, for the sea was coming up and the track of the wheels of the perambulator had been washed away and covered up by the creamy, creeping waves. We looked along the shore some way but in vain, no trace of the wonderful Cowsie was to be seen.

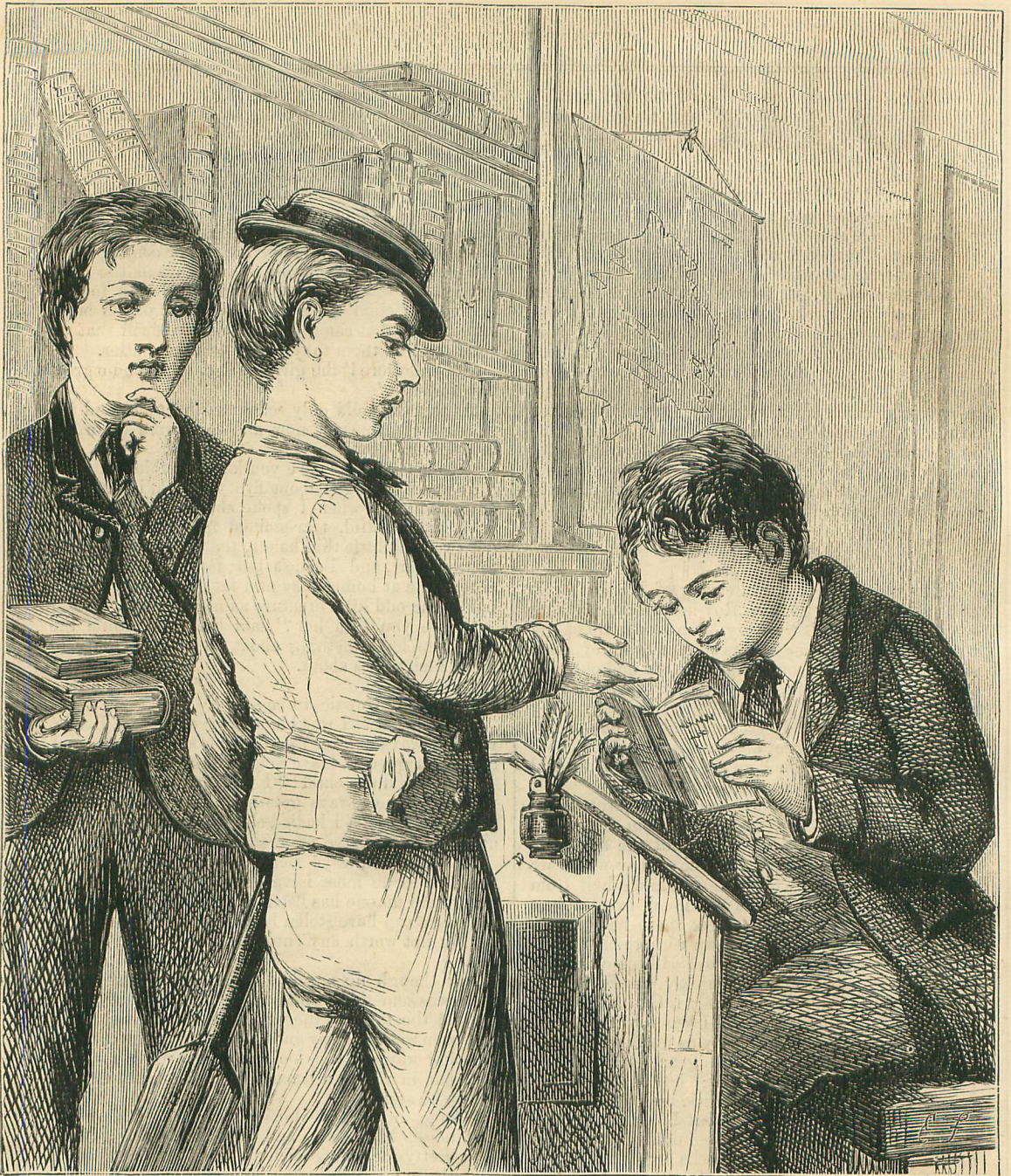
'Come, now,' said the girl, at last. 'Hush up that noise, Miss Amy, and thank the young gentleman pretty for taking such a deal of trouble about a rubbishy old doll, as hadn't an arm left; no! nor only one leg neither; and you couldn't see which side it's face was if it hadn't got a bonnet on.'

'It was my Cowsie,' sobbed the child, 'and Dick gave her to me, and I can't sleep without her on my pillow.'

'You must ask your mother to give you another. I dare say she would.'

'I don't want another; I want my Cowsie, and the nasty sea has washed her away, and she's drowned!'

(To be continued.)



"Hullo!" I said, "there's one missing, isn't there?"

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Chatterbox.



"Poor Robin Redbreast,
Dying in the snow!"

ROBIN AND RUFUS.

A TRUE STORY OF CHRISTMAS.

POOR Robin Redbreast,
Dying in the snow!
How the trees do shiver!
How the wind does blow!
Dear little Robin,
Feels his end draw near,
Thinks that he is going
With the dying year.

All the leaves have fallen,
All the trees are bare,
Hoary-headed winter
Reigneth everywhere:
Robin can remember
Quite a different scene,
When the birds were merry,
When the leaves were green.

Sadly now he ponders
How he used to dine,
What a world he lived in,
Beautiful and fine:
Sun shining gaily!
Worms—delicious food!
Then poor Bob was happy,
Everything was good.

Oh, the charming summer!
Oh, the worms and grubs!
Hope revives within him,
And his beak he rubs:
Rubs against the cruel
Frosty, flinty ground,
Not a single earthworm
Can to-night be found.

He has missed his dinner,
Missed his breakfast too,
For a greedy sparrow
From the house-top flew,
Stole his only berry,
Gobbled up the prize;
Robin turned upon him
Two reproachful eyes.

All his strength is going,
And his fine gay clothes
Loosely hang about him—
Frozen are his toes:
Something white is falling,
Oh! so cold and chill!
Robin chirrups faintly,
Though he feels so ill.

For he hears a woman
Say good words of cheer
‘Merry Christmas greeting,
And a glad New Year!’
Then two women gaily
Talked, and did not guess
How poor Robin suffered
In his sad distress.

‘Heartless, cruel monsters!’
Angry Robin said;

‘You have both a shelter,
And a snug warm bed;
You will have a pudding,
And some hot mince-pies,
So your hearts are happy,
Joy is in your eyes.

Why then be so selfish?
Why not look around?
See poor hapless Robin
Lying on the ground.
He has sung to cheer you
Many a wintry day;
Will you now forget him?
Will you go away?’

Robin judged too harshly;
They were not unkind,
Though they sought a shelter
Leaving him behind.
In the Vicar’s kitchen
They conversed with cook,
Knowing not that Robin
Sighed, and moaned, and shook.

They are warm and happy
In the glad firelight,
He, benumbed and starving
In the wintry night.
Yet his eyes with longing
Fasten on the door,
And his strength he rallies
For one effort more.

But his wings are stiffened,
And he cannot fly;
All his limbs seem useless;
Must poor Robin die?
No, he hops and flutters
Feebly towards the light,
Which for one brief moment
Made the path so bright.

And again it opens,
That enchanted door;
Robin sees the firelight
Playing on the floor:
Robin sees, but stirs not,
He is well-nigh dead,
And the little snowflakes
Fall upon his head.

But his struggling efforts,
Made with so much pain,
Useless as he dreamed them,
Have not been in vain.
Now, as Susan passes,
She can see him lie:
In her hand she takes him—
Robin will not die.

In that pleasant kitchen
He is warmed and fed,
Till, his strength returning,
He can lift his head;
Open-eyed he gazes
At his new abode,
Wonders that the woman
Is so kind and good.

But he is too sleepy
Now to thank and sing,
So his head he nestles
Underneath his wing;
Trusting he will never,
Never know again
All that dreary waiting,
All that bitter pain.

In the Vicar's kitchen
Now he lives at ease,
Going and returning
Just as he may please;
Tapping at the window
If he find it closed,
And behold, it opens,
Quite as he supposed.

'Far above all robins
I am blessed,' says he,
'And my lord the Vicar
Knows and honours me;
When the cook is busy,
Will not let me in,
Through the study window
Entrance I can win.'

So poor foolish Bobby
Grows self-satisfied,
And his many blessings
Fill his heart with pride;
For he thinks his merit
Must be very great,
Now that he is risen
To such high estate.

And when other Robins
To the window come,
Begging for a shelter,
Or at least a crumb,
He is very angry
With his brother-birds,
Flies into a passion,
Uses naughty words.

Robin had been growing
Very grand indeed,
In his new-found palace—
Quite forgot his need;
When the same kind Susan
Who had brought him in,
Found another robin,
Starved, and cold, and thin.

By the fire she put him,
Gave him crumbs of bread—
We will call him Rufus,
From his vest of red.
Rufus, for her kindness
Tried to sing a song,
In came Master Robin,
Bade him hold his tongue.

Flew upon poor Rufus,
Pecked him in the eye,
Called him wicked names, and said
He might go or die.

Rufus was too feeble
To resist his will,
Robin, like a Turco,
Smote him with his bill.

'Do you think,' said Robin,
'Outcasts such as you,
Must be fed and pampered?
In a palace, too!
If my lord the Vicar
Should your boldness see,
Great indeed his anger
And surprise would be!'

Thus he spoke untruly,
But he did not know
That the kindly Vicar
Felt for *all* in woe.
Robin judged his nature
Only by his own,
Thought that special favour
To himself was shown.

Thought for him the firelight
Danced upon the wall,
And the window opened
Only at his call.
Silly little Robin!
Yet, before we blame,
Is not *human* nature
Very much the same?

But my little story
Is not finished yet,
Susan took poor Rufus,
Now her special pet,
Took him to her mistress,
Begged that he might stay
In her cheerful parlour
All that wintry day.

Told of Robin's anger
And his bitter strife,
How he pecked poor Rufus,
Tried to take his life.
And the lady answered,
'He is but a bird;'
Robin, through the keyhole,
Wondered as he heard.

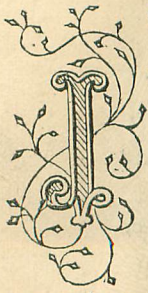
'But a bird,' and *therefore*
To be kindly used;
'But a bird,' and *therefore*
To be much excused:
Not because his merit
Was so very great,
Had he been uplifted
To this high estate;

But because the inmates
Of that palace grand
Love to feed the hungry
With a liberal hand;
Love to help the needy,
Love the poor and small,
Knowing that our Father
Loves and cares for all.

JANET BYRNE.

TWO CHRISTMAS TREES.

From the German.



IN a large, beautiful house in the Market-place, lived the President of a High Court of State. He was a severe old gentleman, who had never knowingly done any injury to any one, but who never would overlook a fault in anybody. All the clerks who were under him had a strict and difficult service to perform. The President had scarcely any friends among the townsfolk, and he neither gave parties nor went to any. A silent old aunt kept his house for him, an older and still more silent servant waited upon him. Thus it happened that very little was known of the President, though he was one of the most important men in the whole city.

His wife had been dead many years. She had left him one only daughter, whom he had devotedly loved. She married, but soon after lost her husband. Two or three years after she also died, and left a little boy, named Emil, whom his grandfather took into his own house.

When the first shock caused by this sad loss was over, the President became as severe and strict as before. He gave little Emil into the charge of the old aunt, and troubled himself no further about him. The child grew up in a dreary solitude. A father's and mother's love were wanting to him—that golden sun in the blue sky of childhood. One day the old President came into a room which he was not accustomed to enter. It was that in which little Emil used to play all alone. The grave, severe grandfather, was attracted by the sight of the boy at play. He remained standing, gazing at the child for some time; then he began to talk to him, and at last to take part in his games. When the aunt came in she was quite frightened at this unexpected sight, but the President said to her,—‘You can send the boy now and then to my room,’ and then went away. After that day Emil often came to his grandfather's apartment, and the old gentleman showed him as much attention and love as was possible in the midst of his many occupations.

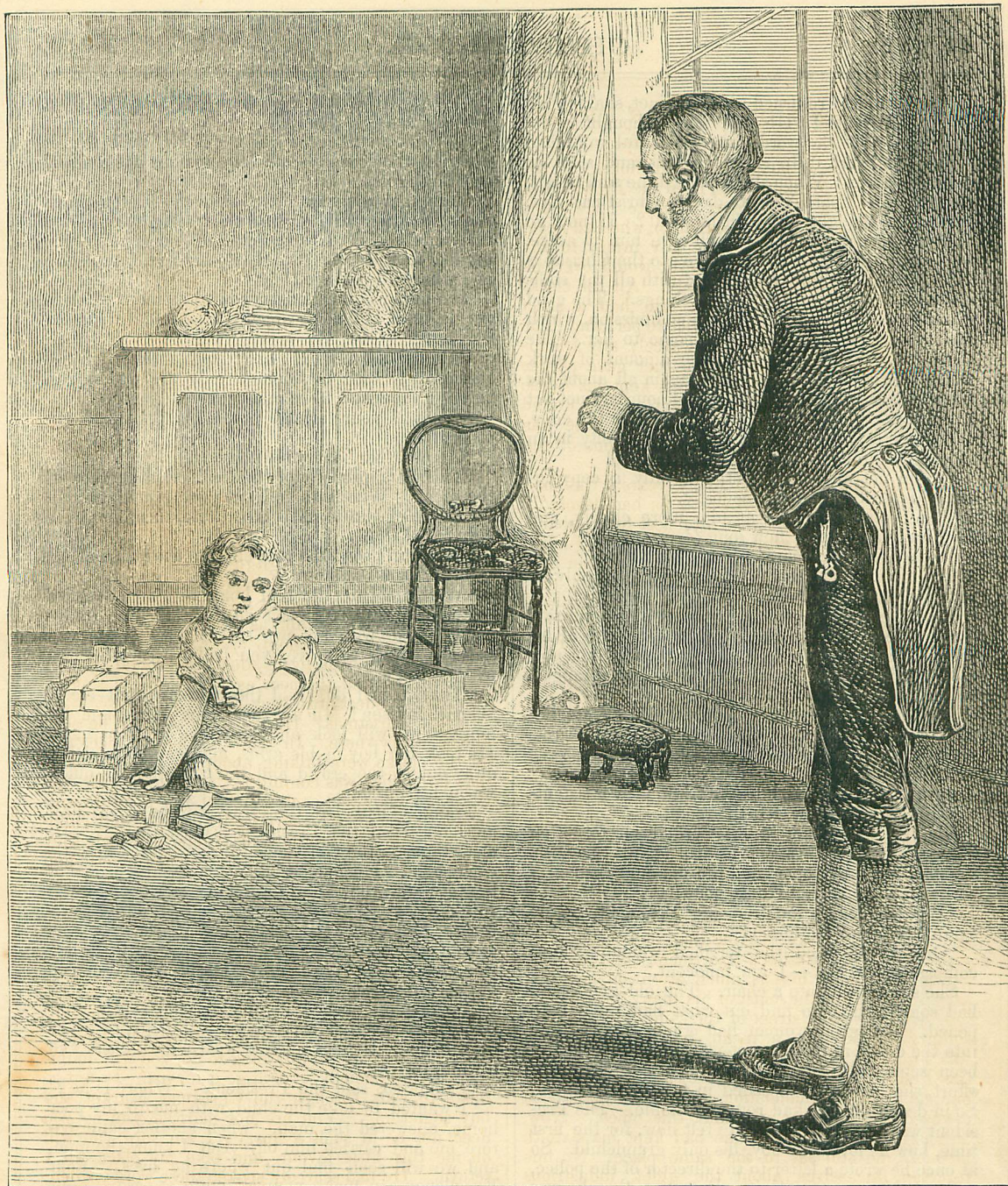
In a narrow back street of the same town another solitary man lived in a mean lodging. His name was Trangott, and he was a poor assistant-clerk in the President's office: when he was eighteen, he had, on the recommendation of his guardian, been received as copying-clerk into this office. Now, although three years ago he had kept his sixtieth birthday, he still sat in the same place. No one troubled themselves about the quiet, industrious man. No one thought of bettering his position. He was himself of such a modest and contented mind that he took no steps towards his own advancement. Thus it had come to pass, that for fifty-four years he had remained a poor assistant-clerk, with a monthly salary of fifteen dollars. In other respects, too, poor Trangott had not been fortunate. About twenty years ago he had married a poor but pious and industrious maiden. He was then hoping that his position would soon be improved, and the young wife was clever and diligent, so that through the

work of her hands she earned many a penny for the little household. For ten years they lived happily and contentedly together; as they had no children, the good couple had no one to love but each other. They shared together all the toils and trials, all the great and little joys and sorrows, of life, and were often very cheerful and happy in their poor but clean little room. Then Marie,—that was the wife's name,—died, and left the poor assistant-clerk quite alone. A woman now came in to attend to his little household matters. She had so much to do for other people in their houses that she had no time left to attend to her own children. Her two boys grew up without any care or instruction. He longed, too, to have some one to whom he could give his love. So he became the teacher of the two lads in reading, writing, and arithmetic, when he came home of an evening, tired and weary, from his office.

The instruction of the two boys, as they made good progress, pleased him much. The neighbours shook their heads at it, and said, ‘Trangott is really very stupid. From early in the morning till late at night he has surely enough to do, and yet he is now bothering himself with other people's children, and is quite happy and contented in doing so.’ But Trangott let the people talk as they liked, and did not trouble himself about them.

So the President lived silent and solitary in his grand house, and the poor assistant-clerk, Trangott, also in his modest little back-room.

It was Christmas. Happy faces were to be seen almost everywhere. In the President's office, too, all the clerks were talking about the happy Christmas Eve which was coming to-day with its gifts and its joy. They told each other of the presents with which they wished to surprise their wives and children, parents and brothers, or sisters, or which they expected from them. Trangott listened quietly and silently. He thought of the little gifts which he was going to present to his two scholars. He had no one besides to whom to give anything, and no one from whom he could expect anything. The day was declining, twilight came on, and the clerks went to their homes. One of them, whose turn it was to remain, as was the custom in the office, till later in the evening, came up to Trangott, and said, ‘My good friend, I don't think anything will happen. But should there be anything to do, you will doubtless be kind enough to arrange it for me. I want so much to walk through the Christmas Market and buy something. You are not married, and so you need not be in such a hurry; I am sure you will do me this little favour, and take my place till I return.’ He had scarcely spoken these words, when, without waiting for an answer, he quickly went out of the room. He trusted to the good nature of the old under-clerk, which all in the office knew well enough how to use. ‘A merry and blessed Christmas!’ Trangott called after him, and continued quietly to write on. After a while he went up to the window, and looked out into the street. He began to hum a Christmas hymn to himself, and was so full of it, that he did not hear when the door opened behind him, and he started when some one inquired, ‘Is no one else here?’



The President and little Emil.

‘No, sir!’ replied Trangott. He knew the voice of the severe and solitary President.

‘Who are you?’ he inquired.

‘The under-clerk, Trangott, sir,’ was the reply.

‘Office-hours are not yet over, and you are here quite alone? What does this mean?’ asked the President.

‘Your Excellency,’ replied Trangott, timidly, ‘the

other clerks are married men, and fathers of families, and to-day is Christmas Eve.’

Christmas! The President had not yet had any time to think about it. He gave him a document which he held in his hand, and said, ‘This affair requires great haste. Set to work at it at once; in an hour the copy must be ready.’

Trangott immediately applied himself to the work.

The President returned to his cabinet, shaking his head. Christmas! He had never thought about it before. But the word,—the wonderful word had struck his heart. He rang the bell, and sent for his old relative. When she appeared, he said to her, 'I have just heard that to-day is Christmas Eve. Have you thought about little Emil? If not, go and buy him anything that will give him pleasure. Or, better still, take him with you to the Christmas Market; the boy will be delighted with all the stalls and with the great variety of playthings.' The good woman went at once to fulfil the commission, which was as surprising as it was welcome to her. The President, very soon after, in the amount of work which still lay before him, forgot again all about the Christmas festival. But the allotted hour had not yet passed away when Trangott appeared with the copy. 'You are punctual; that is a good quality in an official,' said the generally severe President.

'I am not an official yet, but only a copying-clerk,' replied Trangott, modestly.

The President looked at him more closely, and then inquired, 'Since how long?'

'Some forty-five years,' was the reply.

'So long!' said the President; 'and still only an assistant,—a copying-clerk? How comes this?'

Poor Trangott did not know what he should say. The fault lay with the President, who, in spite of his diligence and fidelity, had neither noticed nor promoted him. Much puzzled what to say, Trangott remained silent.

The President, impatient at this, said, 'I am not accustomed to ask people to tell me their secrets which they don't choose to confide to me. Very well. You may go!'

A wave of his hand, and the frightened assistant-clerk, with a low bow, left the room.

The President had, in his work, soon forgotten Trangott and the Christmas festival again. Suddenly the door was burst open, and the old aunt rushed in with a cry of agony, 'He is gone!'

'Who's gone?' inquired the President, as he sprang up quite frightened.

'Our Emil,' cried the terrified woman; 'have compassion on me,—I am innocent.'

She sank down into a chair. The old gentleman had some trouble to find out what had really happened. The good woman had gone with the boy into the crowd in the Market-place, and in it he had been separated from her side. In spite of every effort, she had not succeeded in finding him again. So in deep grief she had returned home. The President was horror-struck. He felt now, for the first time, how he loved the boy, his only grandchild. So at once he wrote a letter to the director of the police, and sent his servant with it. But even then he was by no means tranquil. 'It is best to act myself,' he said, as he quickly threw on his cloak and hastened out into the street towards the Christmas Market.

Immediately after his short conversation with the President, poor Trangott had left the office. His time for leaving was long past. He went across the Christmas Market to the street where he lived: there he saw a great many people standing round a boy, who was trembling with cold and weeping bitterly. He went up and asked, 'What is the matter here?'

'What is the matter?' answered a man; 'why, the boy has lost himself.'

'We must take the child quickly back to his parents, who doubtless are very anxious about him,' said Trangott.

'Yes, that must be done,' said an old woman, as she examined the boy; 'he has a little cloak of fine materials, and a white fur cap; so he must be the child of rich people. What is your name, my son? and where do you live?'

The boy, who was frightened at so many strange people, cried still more violently, and said, 'My name is Emil.'

'Ah, what? Emil!' exclaimed another of the spectators; 'with that name only are we to run through the whole town and seek your parents?'

'What is your father's name, child?' asked another.

'Grandfather,' answered the boy.

'This is a pretty story indeed,' cried another of the men. 'Who is to find out your grandfather in the whole of the town? Are there, then, no police here?'

'You won't send the poor child to the police-office, surely?' said Trangott.

'Well, am I to take him home with me?' replied the man, surlily. 'I can't do that, indeed. I have enough to do with my own six youngsters. If you have so much to spare, you had better take him with you.'

'That I will do,' said the poor assistant-clerk. 'Come, my son! In my room it is warm, and to-morrow we will look and soon find your parents.' He took the boy in his arms, and bore him quickly away out of the crowd and the cold into his quiet, warm little room.

Trangott had left the Market-place about half an hour when the President arrived there. His appearance in the Christmas Market caused no little excitement. He indeed did not know the people of the town, but they knew him, and pressed round him with curiosity. The old gentleman looked much disturbed, and exclaimed, 'My good people, can none of you give me any information about a little boy who has been lost in the crowd here? Which of you has seen my poor Emil?'

A man now pushed up quickly, and said, 'Your Excellency, at your service, I can, I hope, give you information. Didn't the child wear a dark cloak and a white fur cap?'

'I think so,' said the President. 'Where is he?'

'I wanted to take the child with me to my poor home,' answered the man, 'when another came before me and carried him off. But I know the man, and we will soon find out where he lives. Your Excellency can make yourself quite at ease. Your boy is certainly well taken care of.' The President and this man now went away in order to seek for little Emil and his new adopted father.

Trangott meanwhile had safely reached his home with the boy. He placed the child in a large old arm-chair, which stood near the stove, and said, 'Here you can warm yourself and rest, my dear child. I will meanwhile prepare the Christmas table for us.' The old clerk now fetched out the little Christmas tree which he had purchased yesterday

for this evening, and adorned with a few lights. He spread a white cloth on the table, and placed the tree on it. Then he brought out the little gifts which he had bought for his two scholars. Both the boys soon appeared with their mother, and gazed in wonder at the strange child. But Emil, with his eyes wide open, was taken up with what the strange kind man there was doing. At last Trangott was ready: he came up to the boy and led him to the Christmas table. Then he said to the two scholars, 'As we have to-day received an unexpected visit, I have divided the apples and the nuts into three portions. I hope you will be very good, and not be jealous of each other. You two big boys shall both have a writing-case and a pencil; but our little guest here shall have the best thing which I had designed for you.'

He sat down now in the arm-chair, and took the little Emil on his knee, and showed him the Christmas present which he had reserved for him.

Just then the door opened and the President entered, without the children and Trangott perceiving him in their Christmas joy. The unexpected sight surprised the old gentleman, and fixed him to the spot. He saw and heard for a long time, quite amazed, but much touched and pleased. Then he exclaimed, 'Emil!' The child heard, and at once knew the voice. He sprang from the strange man's knees, and ran rejoicing, with the cry, 'Grandfather! grandfather!' up to the old gentleman. Trangott was frightened when he saw the President, who at first took no notice of him, but caressed his grandson. Then he gave his hand to the clerk, and said, 'I thank you for the boy's safety.'

'I was fortunate enough to find him, and took him with me,' stuttered Trangott in his fear.

'You have not only given him a sheltering roof,' continued the President, 'but you have also prepared for him a Christmas joy. This is very, very kind of you. Whom have I to thank?'

'Ah, your Excellency,' cried Trangott, 'I have only done my duty.'

'You know me?' asked the President. 'Who are you? But, stop, have we not met before?'

'I am the assistant-clerk, Trangott,' he replied, 'and only an hour ago delivered up a copy to your Excellency.'

'Right! right!' said the old gentleman. 'I have shortened your Christmas pleasures by the work I gave you, and you, in return, have given my grandson an extra delight. Well, Mr. Trangott, I now remember that I asked you a question a little while ago, and got no answer to it. How is it that you, at sixty years of age, are still only a copying-clerk?'

Trangott dared not hesitate any longer, so now he related the whole story of his life; and all that he did not tell the President found out through the questions which he knew how to put to him. Soon the whole history of the modest man, with all his cares and blighted hopes, was clear before him.

'I thank you,' said the President, as he held out his hand to him. 'After the holidays, if God will, we shall meet again. Now it is high time that I should return home with my little grandson. Once more I thank you, and heartily wish you a merry Christmas. Good night!'

With these words the President departed.

The two holydays, Christmas Day and that which followed it, passed away. The next day Trangott appeared punctually at his post.

The President's servant entered the office, and called out with a loud voice,—

'Is the assistant-clerk Trangott here?'

All the clerks looked up with curiosity.

'Here I am,' said Trangott, as he descended from his high stool.

The servant made him a bow, and said,—

'His Excellency requests the honour of Mr. Trangott's company to tea with him this evening, at seven o'clock.'

Such an invitation had never been given to any one of its occupants since the office had been built, and now, of all people in the world, it had been given to an assistant-clerk! One after the other came up to Trangott and said,—

'I heartily rejoice in the honour which has come upon you. I have always considered you to be one of our best officials. I hope you will remember, at the right time, what good friends we have always been.'

Trangott arrived punctually at seven o'clock. The President received his guest with a friendly welcome, and said, 'Great injustice has been done to you, and I myself am the most to blame, and heartily I beg your forgiveness. I have also confessed this to our most gracious Prince, when I represented your circumstances to him yesterday, and he wished me to atone for this injustice in any way in my power.'

Poor Trangott stood there like a statue. The old gentleman continued: 'You have borne quite long enough the toilsome and tedious service of a copying-clerk. It is time now, with your weak health, that you should have repose. His Highness has consented that you should now retire with a pension of three hundred dollars.'

Trangott trembled with joyful excitement. Three hundred dollars! Why, that was almost double the salary he had hitherto received for all his work.

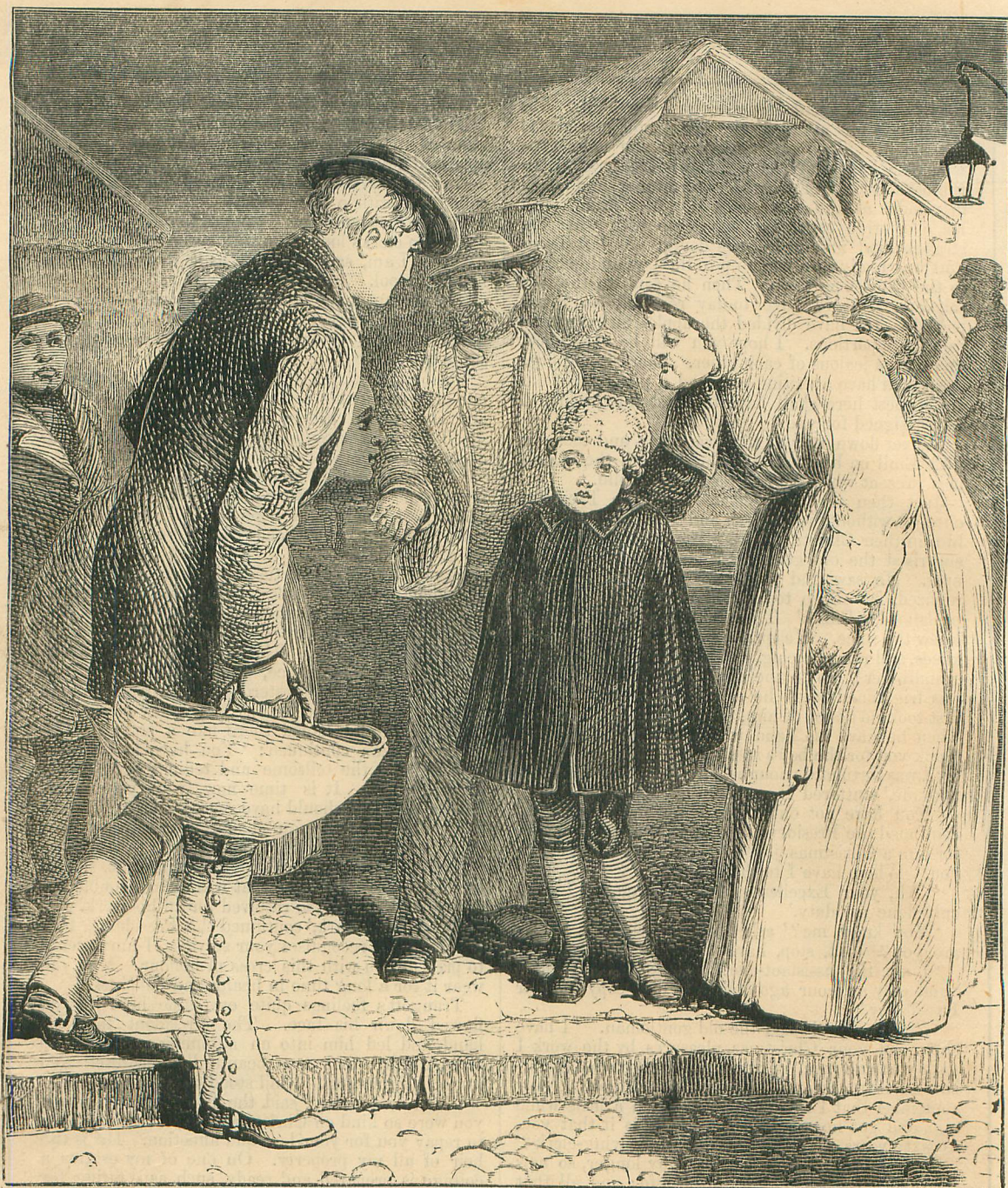
'And as a mark,' continued the President, 'that his Highness recognises your services, I am ordered to present you with this cross of honour. May you wear it for a long time in health and happiness!'

Trangott's feelings quite overcame him. Tears flowed down his face. The President took his hand, and led him into an adjoining room, where stood a Christmas tree beautifully decorated and brightly lighted up. Emil stood joyfully beside it.

'That is the boy,' said the President, 'to whom you were so kind on Christmas Eve, and who wishes to repay you for your love and affection. He is the heir of all my property. On one of my estates a cottage is prepared and ready, such as is fitting for an honest man of your rank in life. My Emil presents this to you, and hopes that he may often be able to visit you there.'

What else happened that evening in the President's house we have not heard. When our honest old friend reached his home again, he clasped his hands and exclaimed gratefully, 'Glory to God in the highest!' Then his eyes became moist, and he said, sadly, 'Ah, Marie, had you only lived for this!'

J. F. C.



"What is the matter here?" asked Trangott.

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Chatterbox.



The Monkey and the Nuts. By HARRISON WEIR.

THE MONKEY AND THE NUTS.

From the Italian.

WITHIN a balcony of state,
 At ease, and happy beyond measure,
 A Monkey sat, who had of late
 Become the master of a treasure.
 Though not, indeed, of gems or gold,
 Mark (I translate it to the letter),
 But fresh, sweet nuts, which I've been told,
 Friend Pug esteemed as something better.
 These in a sack he tied with care,
 For other monkeys, by the dozen,
 Came flocking round, in hopes to share
 The rich possessions of their cousin.
 They thronged beneath, in greedy train,
 The balcony where he was seated;
 But quickly found 'twas all in vain
 They reasoned, threatened, or entreated.
 For Pug, however rich in fruit,
 Appeared in bounty somewhat lacking;
 And flung, in answer to their suit,
 The shells of nuts which he'd been cracking.
 At this the suppliants, filled with rage,
 Resolved to sue to him no longer;
 But battle next prepared to wage,
 As they in numbers were the stronger.
 The Monkey, on this rude attack,
 Although he deemed the means expensive,
 Without ado untied the sack,
 And turned his nuts to arms offensive.
 Pug with these missives aimed his blows
 So hard and fast, that in conclusion,
 His smarting and bepelting foes
 Fled off in cowardly confusion.
 And now he proudly stood alone,
 With feelings that of rapture savoured,
 Prepared to thank, in joyous tone,
 Dame Fortune, who his cause had favoured,
 That he had, in the late attack,
 His precious nuts so well defended;
 But cast his eyes upon his sack,
 And saw that they were all expended!
 Through these he had maintained his place;
 And now his foes had all retreated,
 He stood precisely in the case
 As if himself had been defeated.
 Thus oft we see a triumph cost
 As much as if the day were lost.

A. S.

A TRUTH.

IT was like the song of some wonderful bird, and it made the air shine after the sound had died away; and yet it was just the remark of a brave young man who walked past me one day, arm-in-arm with a companion.

'Depend upon it, Tom, old St. Edmund of Canterbury was about right when he said to somebody, "Work as though you would live for ever; live as though you would die to-day."'

Tom nodded, and the two walked on.



SAVED BY SNUFF!

GERMAN merchant, who had purchased a business in Ireland, tells the following story:—

One dark December night, in the year 1871, I left my office in the city of Cork, to return homeward. My house was about three miles from the town, in a lonely spot, and could only be reached by a lonely road, which, however, I knew well.

That evening I carried with me a large sum of money, which made me cautious and anxious. All the stories of robbers which I had heard or read came into my mind, and I was constantly thinking of being waylaid and suddenly attacked. I could not get rid of these unpleasant thoughts. With suspicion and caution I went rapidly on, spying timidly at every rock, and thinking that a lurking brigand was concealed behind each bush, eager to seize my money. I would gladly have returned to Cork, but that was out of the question, for my family expected me at home; and as I usually returned very punctually, any delay on my part would have caused them the greatest anxiety. I therefore continued my road, repenting very much that I had not hired some escort in the town, so as not to have been so entirely alone.

Now I reached a lonely house, and had got over half of my unpleasant journey. Bright streaks of light poured through its windows down upon my road and its immediate neighbourhood. Just as I approached the building a dark form came out of the house, passed through the lighted space, and then hastened away rapidly into the darkness.

The features of the man, who had looked sharply at me, I could not indeed distinguish, for he had passed too quickly through the glimmer of light. It seemed to me as if he had waited for me, in order to rob me. This idea caused me more trouble than ever, still I continued my way; but with doubled speed, for I wished to overtake the man and pass by him. This was impossible for me, although I so hastened my steps that I almost ran. The more I hurried, the more did the dark figure before me hurry too. My suspicions that this man had some evil design against me were increased.

He now reached a hill, over which the road passed, ascending it with undiminished speed, whilst I remained standing for a while, and then followed him quite slowly. This height was the most solitary spot on the whole road; with the exception of the ruins of an old fallen house, there was not a single human habitation near. If, therefore, the man had an intention of attacking me, this was the fittest place for it, and I must hold myself prepared for the worst.

Unfortunately I was completely unarmed. In vain I sought for a cudgel or stick; I had to content myself with a large sharp stone which lay upon the road. Then I took off my shoes and put my cash, which consisted of money and bank-notes, in two equal portions inside them. After I had put my

shoes on again, their uncomfortable and unusual contents caused me to walk slowly. When I approached the highest point of the hill I felt stronger and more cheerful than I had done since I left the town. Anxiety and fear vanished from my mind, anger and indignation took their place. I found strength and courage to offer a bold front to the scoundrel who was thus waylaying a lonely and peaceful wayfarer.

Now I had reached the summit, and before me in the middle of the road stood the dark form of the man.

'Stop there!' he cried to me.

'Who are you?' I asked calmly; 'what do you want of me?'

'A trifle,' he said, with a mocking laugh. 'I only want the money which you are carrying home. It must, I am sure, be too heavy for you.'

'Back! let me pass by quietly, or I will shoot you!' I cried, as I pretended to put my hand to the breast-pocket of my coat.

'Oh! oh! let that be!' said the rascal, with a cunning smile. 'You will not frighten me! With what are you going to shoot, then? Out with your money, or I will shoot *you* down!'

And he held a pistol close before my face. I quickly started back.

'Now, be quick,' he said. 'I have no time for long parleying; out with your money, or I will make an end of you!'

'Well, you must wait a minute,' I said, with vexation. 'I must give you, I see, what I have upon me. It is not much.'

'Now, no shuffling,' cried the rogue; 'I will have that packet of paper-money which you are carrying home; don't think I am to be bought off with a trifle.'

During these words he still held the pistol pointed at me; but I had collected my thoughts, was calm, and full of presence of mind.

'Indeed! you will have the paper-money, too, will you?' I said, and turned a little aside.

'Of course!' he said, mockingly; 'but if I am forced to parley much longer, it will be through my pistol. Do you understand?'

'Very well, there is something for you!' I cried, as I hurled the sharp stone with all my strength into his face.

The rogue raised a loud cry of pain; the pistol fell from his hand, and went off as it struck the ground. But he rushed upon me, and seized hold of me.

He was a strong man; but I was animated by the courage of despair. Life, family, friends, home, all was forgotten at the moment, and I would rather have died a hundred times than have yielded to this fellow.

'The money! Give me the money!' he exclaimed, in a fury.

'Never!' was my reply.

He grasped me in his powerful arms. We wrestled for a while, then both fell to the ground, he uppermost. However, his right hand, owing to a blow he had received, was powerless; he could only make use of the left.

Terrible was the struggle. Again and again did I strike my enemy on the head with the stone, which

fortunately lay on the ground beside me. But at last he wrenched my only weapon from me. *Soon*, however, he let it fall again, and the stone rolled such a long way off that neither of us could reach it.

The scoundrel now seized me by the throat, and faint, and utterly exhausted by the desperate struggle, I was completely in his power.

'Give me the money!' he exclaimed again; adding, 'it is not my intention to murder you; but if I cannot get it any other way, I must. Out with the money, and I will let you go!'

In the last moment of despair, when the obstinate courage which hitherto had animated me was beginning to fail, a thought suddenly came into my head, to which I owed my unexpected deliverance.

'Wait, I will give you the money,' I groaned, and put my hand into my pocket: 'but let me loose.'

The rascal let go his hold. I drew out my snuff-box, and opened it. My enemy, who could not see in the darkness what it really was, bent eagerly down over the supposed money-pocket.

'There, take it!' I exclaimed; as I threw the entire contents of my snuff-box into his eyes.

Never shall I forget the roar of fury and pain which the robber raised. He sprang up, blinded by the pungent powder. Only a few minutes were required to complete my victory. I seized the fellow, and succeeded in binding his hands behind his back with my neckcloth.

No sooner was this done than I heard steps approaching; I called, and a well-known voice replied. It was my servant, who had come to meet me, because the usual time of my return home was long since past. We conveyed the robber to my house, where we confined him under locks and bolts till the next morning, when we delivered him up to the authorities. In the course of the investigation it turned out that he was a well-known thief from London, who had come to try his fortune in Ireland. He was condemned to ten years' penal servitude, and will have plenty of time to reflect on the effects of a box filled with good stinging snuff.

J. F. C.

WHAT THE MICROSCOPE REVEALS.

LEWENBOECK tells us of an insect seen with the microscope, of which twenty-seven millions would only equal a mite.

Insects of various kinds may be seen in the cavities of a grain of sand.

Mould is a forest of beautiful trees, with the branches, leaves, and fruit.

Butterflies are fully feathered.

Hairs are hollow tubes.

The surface of our bodies is covered with scales like a fish; a single grain of sand would cover one hundred and fifty of these scales, and yet a scale covers five hundred pores. Through these narrow openings the perspiration forces itself like water through a sieve.

Each drop of stagnant water contains a world of living creatures, swimming with as much liberty as whales in the sea.

Each leaf has a colony of insects grazing on it, like cows on a meadow.



WINTER.

WINTER SONG.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX.'

Allegretto.

Summer is all ve-ry well, you see— Boating and swimming and that, And
 catching a fish is a ve-ry good spree, And so is holding a bat; Some mirth's to be got when
 days are hot; But give us old Winter for fun, We say; Give us old Winter for fun. . . .

Copyright.

SUMMER is all very well, you see—
 Boating, and swimming, and that,
 And catching a fish is a very good spree,
 And so is holding a bat;
 Some mirth's to be got—when days are hot;
 But give us old Winter for fun,
 We say;
 Give us old Winter for fun.

In the cold forest we hide, we hide,
 Armed with a good cross-bow;
 Or over the lake on skates we glide,
 Or we build a castle of snow;
 Then, 'O mihi!' how the balls do fly!
 No fun like a battle of snow,
 We say;
 No fun like a battle of snow!

And what do we care when the dark night comes,
 And we must shut the door?
 Do we sit, and mope, and bite our thumbs,
 And wish it were June once more?

Oh, no, not we! Oh, no, not we!
 No tree like a Christmas Tree,
 We say;
 No tree like a Christmas Tree!
 And oh, what a lark to cork one's face,
 And dress like an Ashantee;
 Or like an old dame, in wig and lace,
 Going out to cards and tea!
 Call Winter tame? For shame! for shame!
 No, jolly Old Winter for me,
 I say;
 No, jolly Old Winter for me!
 Oh, when does time so merrily jog,
 And the hours so blithely fly,
 As when we are round the blazing log,
 And the winds are loud and high?
 Call Winter slow? Not so! not so!
 Old Winter we jolly boys love,
 I say;
 Old Winter we jolly boys love!

G. S. O.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 23.)

BERTIE came to the rescue while I was cudgelling my brains for something consoling to say, remembering how he had comforted Edie sometimes under a severe loss of the kind.

'Perhaps the fairies have taken her away,' said he, 'over the sea to fairyland; and, do you know, one of the fairies has just whispered in my ear that they are going to send you another Cowsie instead.'

The child still sobbed, but she was listening. 'I don't want another.'

'What! not a Cowsie with black curls and red cheeks, and eyes that open and shut?'

The child turned round. 'Did the fairies tell you all that?'

'And dressed as fine as anything: a white what-do-you-call-it gown, red ribbons, pink boots, and a hat with a feather in it, and no end of petticoats and things,' went on Bertie, growing eloquent with his subject.

Meanwhile I had been telling the girl that she had better go home by the road, as the tide would be up against the cliffs before she reached the last point before Saltby.

'It's a mile further, and more, and it's all because we've been wasting our time looking for that bothering old doll.'

However, she came up the cliff-path with us, both of us lending a hand to guide the perambulator as smoothly as we could over the rough ground. Bertie and the little girl grew great friends during the short distance that our way lay together; she told him that her name was Amy, and that she had something wrong with her back, and always had to lie down, sometimes in great pain; that Cowsie was the short for Cowslip, and that Dick had given the doll to her. Dick was her brother, and there was no one like him in the world. She asked when the fairies would send the new Cowsie? And Bertie said she would not be ready for three weeks, and that if it was fine on the Saturday afternoon, and she could be brought along the shore again to the little bay, the new Cowsie should be in readiness for her. And so we parted with her, and she looked quite smiling and bright as she waved her little hand to us from the Saltby road.

'Mother will get the doll,' Bertie said; 'and she and Edie will dress it up smart, and that Saturday will be the first after the Easter holidays.'

'Oh, yes!' I answered. 'I could see what you were driving at, plain enough.'

CHAPTER V.

MOTHER was very much interested when we told her of little Amy and the lost doll, and she was very willing to take the part of the good fairy that Bertie had described, and to prepare a worthy successor to the lost Cowsie. After much consultation and many serious thoughts on the part of Edie, who was also deeply interested in the affair, a doll was bought which answered to Bertie's description, with black ringlets,

and a broad face with pink cheeks, and a small simpering mouth, and black staring eyes that shut up when she was laid down—altogether what Edie described as a real beauty. And then mother and Edie set to work (which generally means that mother does the work and Edie looks on), and the doll was rigged out in a white frock, and pink sash, and pink shoes, and a straw hat with a pink ribbon round it.

'And I helped, Tom, indeed I did,' said Edie. 'I made her necklace all myself, and I threaded mother's needle twice—didn't I, mother?'

I think the boys would have laughed if they could have seen what was inside Bertie's trunk when we went back to school after Easter; but they never got the chance, for Bertie confided the secret to the matron who packs and unpacks for us and looks after our clothes, and she took care of Miss Cowsie till the Saturday afternoon came. We always brought back a basket of good things after the holidays, and this time we did not come empty-handed, and as many of the boys had done the same there was an exchange of dainties. For the first two or three mornings there was quite a display of good things at breakfast—porreries, German sausages, marmalade and jam, and even eggs and bloaters: but we had to make interest with the cook to get these last cooked for us, and as we were very often at feud with her, we preferred to bring things that we could have without her help. This plentiful supply soon ran short, and we were reduced to our ordinary bread-and-butter fare; but some of the fellows made their little hoards of cake and biscuits, and oranges and such-like, spin out for a week or two into the term. The baskets were always given into the charge of the matron, and then, when we wanted anything from them, we went into her room to fetch it. Our basket was very soon empty, for there were two pair of hands to go to work at it, and a good many more than two mouths to make away with the contents. I think the only fellow in our class who brought back no grub with him was Hodson, and so I was not surprised to see Bertie towing him off to the matron's room the very first morning after our return, for I knew that Bertie would almost forget his dislike to him in his pity for his having no supply of his own. But I was surprised in the afternoon when I went to the box to find what a hole had been made in the contents.

'Hullo, Bertie! you have been going it just about!'

'Well, Tom, I thought I'd like to give Hodson a tuck-in this morning; but I was almost sorry I had done it, for he was not content to eat a bit and have done with it, but he began stowing things away in his pockets, and this afternoon he came sneaking up to me and asked if I could spare another orange. "They're so uncommon good," he said. I did not like to say no, but there was only one left and I'd rather any one else had it.'

'Pig!' was my emphatic reply, and I repeated it again about half an hour later, when I came on Hodson all of a sudden in the schoolroom, and found him putting away in his desk a little hoard—a slice of cake, a jam tart, and two oranges.

'Hullo!' I said.

"I've got a plum cake,
And a rare feast I'll make;
I'll eat, and I'll stuff, and I'll cram."

Hodson grew very red when he saw that I had caught him out, and he stammered out something about 'Carter having given it to him.'

'Oh, I didn't think you had cribbed it!' I answered, but in my mind I thought he was quite capable of it.

The day after this was Saturday, which was always a half-holiday at Highmore, and this was the day which Bertie had appointed for meeting the little girl and giving her the doll. We both of us very much looked forward to the presentation, and we had many fears that it might be wet, or that there might be a lot of other fellows about, for we should have had no end of chaff if we had been caught with the doll. But luckily it was a splendid day, and the first day of cricket, so every one was at the cricket-field; and I was more than half inclined to go there too and let Bertie go alone, as Roy wanted me to come and bowl for him, but Bertie was so eager for me to go with him that I went. The only fellow who was not at cricket besides ourselves was Hodson, who went slouching off on the Salby road on one of his solitary walks before we started. I must say we were both rather relieved when we were well out of sight of Highmore, and there was no chance of hearing a voice say 'Hullo, you fellows! what have you got there?' for the doll was an uncomfortable possession. But we were quite left alone, and reached the little bay without meeting any one. We had brought our boats with us, and it was lucky that we had, for the afternoon was nearly gone before the perambulator appeared.

The little girl looked whiter and feebler even than she did before, but the colour rushed into her cheeks quite bright and rosy, and her eyes grew larger, and rounder, and brighter, and she clasped her poor little hands tightly together in silent delight when Bertie pulled away the paper and held up the new Cowsie before her. She could not say anything or thank us, but she just lay still holding it up, and sometimes touching its curls or its frock; but when she laid it down and it really shut its eyes, it was altogether too much for her, and she burst out crying, and I was half inclined to cry too, though I can't think why.

Sarah, the servant-girl, was a rough, grumbling creature, but very kind-hearted at the bottom, and fond of the poor little child, and while Bertie coaxed Amy and comforted her as well as he knew how, Sarah held forth to me,—

'I never thought as you young gents would think twice of what you said that day, and so I've told the child times out of mind, but there was no turning her. She took a terrible fancy to the young gent there, and she held to it as he'd keep his word. And she has been that ill, too! It seemed for all the world as if she couldn't sleep without that trumpery old doll of hers; and then she couldn't eat neither, and her ma was in such a taking about her as I never saw. Some days she'd do nothing but fret and fidget, and that was bad enough; and some days she'd lie still, and that was worse, for she looked so mortal bad. If it hadn't been for Master Dick, I don't know whatever we should have done; but he's terrible good to her, he is. I don't believe as he slept a wink all last week, he was up and down to her all night till he was downright wore out, and

I said to myself, says I, "We'll be having him laid up next." But she never forgot the doll. "Sarah," she'd say every night, "how many days till Saturday?" and then in the morning says she, "One day less before Saturday." But I never thought as she'd be well enough to come all this way. Why, we couldn't get her to eat nothing all day yesterday, and to-day she only fancied a little bit of orange; but she were that set on coming, that missus says to me, "Sarah," says she, "it will do her more harm to be fretting all the afternoon than to go." So I put on my bonnet and came right off, and she do look none the worse for it, but all the better. But I must be going on, for it won't never do to keep her out after the sun, and I've got to go beyond Seacliff now. I come most Saturdays along here to the farm there, for the butter, but it's a pretty long stretch there and back, let alone pushing the chaise.

'Leave her here,' said Bertie, who was deep in talk with Amy about the wonderful doll; 'you'll get along faster without her, and Amy will not mind stopping with us for a bit—will you?'

Sarah was doubtful at first whether missus would like it, but as Amy was very sure that she would not mind, Sarah marched off with the basket, leaving the perambulator and the child to our care. The child seemed indeed, as Sarah said, to have taken a terrible fancy to Bertie. He sat down on the beach by her, and I sat a little way off throwing stones into the sea. I could hear Bertie's voice going on, for he seemed to be doing most of the talking; and sometimes I caught a word or two that he said, generally something about fairies, or dolls, or Edie, or mother.

But I could hear nearly everything that she said, for her voice was so shrill, and thin, and clear like a bell, and it was almost always of Dick that she spoke; how handsome he was, and tall, and good, and clever; how patient too, and gentle, never tired, or cross, or rough like other people. So she went on, always on Dick's perfections, till I found myself wondering what this marvellous Dick was like, and it seemed to me that there was only one person who quite answered to this description, and that was—Harry Roy.

(To be continued.)

IMMORTALITY.

NAPOLEON being in the gallery of the Louvre one day, attended by the Baron Denon, turned round suddenly from a fine picture, which he had viewed for some time in silence, and said to him, 'That is a noble picture, Denon.'

'Immortal!' was Denon's reply.

How long, inquired Napoleon, 'will this picture last?'

Denon answered that, 'with care, and in a proper situation, it might last, perhaps, five hundred years.'

'And how long,' said Napoleon, 'will a statue last?'

'Perhaps,' replied Denon, 'five thousand years.'

'And this,' returned Napoleon, sharply, 'this you call immortality!'





Amy and Bertie.

Chatterbox.



Dinner-Time.

DINNER-TIME.

FIRST.

COME, mistress, come—the clock has struck
the hour;
Women of honour never mind a shower.

SECOND.

Do come, and quickly; noon is over-late.
One gets so peckish, breakfasting at eight.

THIRD.

If mistress waits until the day is fine,
It's my opinion we shall never dine.

FOURTH.

Mistress, be quick, or else there'll surely be
No time to get an appetite for tea!

FIFTH (*sighing*).

How sad it is to live with such a lot,
Who think and talk of nothing but the pot!

SIXTH.

My virtuous friend, I much admire thy spleen;
Leave us the pot, and dine upon the green.

SEVENTH.

O how I've watched that blessed bit of blue!
Now she may come and hardly wet her shoe.

EIGHTH.

Shoe! all such nonsense puts me in a pet;
Why should she care? *we* never mind the wet.

NINTH.

Plague on the weather!—now it's quarter-past.
Hip, hip, hurrah, though, here she comes at last!

TENTH.

Of course I knew it, but I held my bill:
Wise men say little—prudent birds are still.

G. S. O.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 39.)

CHAPTER VI.



AFTER this it grew into a regular custom for Bertie to go to the little bay on Saturday afternoon, to meet Sarah and the perambulator, and he was generally left in charge while Sarah went on to the farm; for a great friendship had sprung up between him and Amy, and I don't know which was the most disappointed when Saturday was wet or when Sarah came without the perambulator. This last event did not often occur; for Amy grew much better in the warm, bright spring weather, and got to look rather less transparent and shadowy than she did that first day that we met her. And Bertie was quite full of her; she seemed to fill the place in his heart that had been left empty when Larry went away, which had been filled in my own case

by Roy. Indeed, I think it was a good deal my being so taken up with Roy that made Bertie think all the more of poor little Amy; for Roy would often want me to bowl for his cricket-practice, or field, or something else, or join in games that Bertie was too small to take part in: so we were more separated than in Larry's time. I would rather fetch and carry for Roy than take the lead with any other fellow. There was no regular fagging at Highmore, but I was Roy's fag all the same, though we were so nearly of an age. He had so many friends, too—there were half-a-dozen fellows at least that were great chums with him; but somehow, I think, he preferred me to any of them, and I was so proud of his preference that the fellows found it out and used to chaff me about it, and call me 'Roy's shadow,' and I was quite pleased with the name. Of course, as the term went on the excitement about the exhibition increased—sometimes Roy was ahead and sometimes Hodson; so there was no telling which would win in the end, though I had no doubt that Roy would be the winner: for in the examination, at least, fair-play would be ensured, and Hodson's cribs could be of no use to him. The thing that was the most trouble to Roy was his Latin verses, and he very often got turned down for these, while Hodson generally did them very well; and so he ought, for he took an awful lot of trouble over them, and always had his nose in a dictionary, and his little gnawed bit of pencil at work. But besides this, Bertie and I more than half suspected that he got a lift with them from some one on the sly; for he was always off by himself on half-holidays, tearing away towards Saltby, and no one knew where he went or what he did, and he looked as cross as a bear if any one stopped or spoke to him: but it was a strange thing that his verses were always capitally done after a half holiday, and the time when he came to grief over them was after one pouring wet Saturday afternoon, when he was obliged to stop in. He spent all the afternoon fidgeting up and down the large school-room, looking first out of one window and then out of the other, till Blake inquired if 'St. Vitus's dance ran in his family,' or if he was practising dancing for the examination. He didn't seem able to settle to anything, and kept getting in everybody's way; and when I had shied a Gradus across the room at Blake he got his great stupid head just in between us, and got such a clap on his ear that must have made it tingle for a fortnight. Then, too, when Blake had got his squirt full of ink, and was letting it play gently at the back of Clarkson's head, who, of course, was asleep, Hodson came blundering past and knocked his elbow, and sent all the ink flying up right across the ceiling. Such an awful mess, and such a rowing afterwards from the Doctor! Well, anyhow, his verses did not get done well, and he went down on Monday in consequence. Blake was very sympathetic on that occasion, assuring him that 'gold sank and straws floated,' as he had found by experience.

Blake was older than we were, and had managed to pass through the fourth class, no one could tell how. He used to say it was because Mr. Hutton was tired of seeing him there, and that it gave him quite a shock when he found he had been sent up

into the fifth. He had established himself at the bottom of the fifth—not quite the bottom, but two places up, and prided himself on always keeping the same place. He had carved his name elaborately on the desk, and used to add some ornament every day. He said he had a design for ornamenting the desk which was to take up all the time till midsummer, and that he could not spare one day, and that by midsummer the desk would be something wonderful, and of great value, and he should then present it solemnly to the Doctor as the result of a year's industry and application. One day I found him in a regular rage, and I could not think what had happened, till I found that he had answered a question by accident and gone up several places, and had not cut a chip all day.

Well, to go back to Hodson and his verses. After that wet Saturday I got all the more certain that Hodson was helped by some one, and I and Bertie made a plan for following him one day and seeing where he went to and what he was about. But always something came in the way and prevented us; and besides that, we were not quite sure that it was fair to play the spy, even on Hodson. One day, at the end of May, I had been trying to help Roy with his verses a bit, looking out words. Hodson had also been working at the other end of the room; but he finished before we did, and went out. Roy went across the room soon after to fetch a book, and as he went I saw him stoop and pick up a bit of paper off the ground, and stand looking at it.

'Hullo!' I cried out, 'what's that?' He did not answer for a minute, but stood turning it over.

'Why, you never mean to say that that's Hodson's verses?'

'Oh, it's nothing!' said Roy, crumpling up the paper and thrusting it into his pocket. 'It's an old letter of mine.'

'A letter? Are you sure, Roy? It looked exactly like Hodson's verses, dirty and scrawly as usual.'

It seemed to me, even at that distance, that I could clearly see the blue-lined paper, and Hodson's untidy writing; but it did not look a bit like a letter.

'I say, it would be a lark to frighten Dan! a bit, and make him think he had lost his precious verses. Are you sure you have not made a mistake?'

'Mistake?' said Roy, quite sharply. 'My letters are not much like Hodson's scrawl I imagine. Come now, shut up, or I shan't have done till midnight.'

So, of course, I knew I had made a mistake, and thought no more about it till next morning, just before school, when Hodson came in, in a tremendous state of mind, saying he had lost his copy of verses.

'I say, Carter, have you seen them anywhere about? I must have dropped them. I thought they were inside my exercise-book; but I can't find them anywhere, and I've torn up the rough copy.' And he kept poking about among the desks, peering with his short-sighted eyes, seizing on every scrap of paper that could possibly be the missing verses. Of course my mind went back to the piece of paper that Roy had picked up the evening before, and the look of it as he held it in his hand, and just for a minute I felt a pang of doubt whether after all Roy might

not have made a mistake: but it was only for a minute, for Roy's word was to be trusted even against the testimony of eyes and ears, and he had said it was a letter which he had picked up. I was angry with myself even for the minute's doubt, and vented my anger on Hodson accordingly.

'Bother your verses! Why ever can't you put them somewhere safe? I dare say they've been swept up and burnt, if they were lying about all night.'

However, I hunted about the schoolroom and under the desks with him, more for my own satisfaction than to oblige him, but nowhere could I find the paper. So Hodson had no verses to hand in to the Doctor, and gave his excuse in such a stammering indistinct way that the Doctor did not understand they had been written and lost, and so made no allowance for it as he might otherwise have done. I think I felt kinder that day towards Hodson than I had ever done before, for I felt sorry for him, for it was such a provoking thing to have all his trouble for nothing. Roy, too, was so vexed about it, he went to Hodson after the class and said, 'I say, Hodson, I'm awfully sorry about the verses.'

It made me still more ashamed of having ever doubted him, and I was quite angry with Blake for coming in with his chaff.

'I guess Prince Thingumbob would rather have lost his own a hundred times over.'

That afternoon Roy was mending his fishing-rod, and cut his hand badly while he was doing it, and he called me to get his handkerchief out of his pocket to tie it up. As I drew out the handkerchief some papers came out with it and fluttered down on the floor. Roy caught at them as they fell, and crumpled them together with his other hand; but not before I had seen that one of them was a paper with blue lines, and had on the top Richard Hodson's name in his own writing.

I tied up Roy's hand in silence; and I think he knew what I had seen, for he began talking and laughing.

'I get such a lot of rubbish in my pockets,' he said. 'I don't know how all the things get there, I'm sure; and I'm obliged to have a regular clear out now and then. Hullo! Tom, where are you off to?'

'I'm going to Bertie,' I said. But I did not go to him; but went off into the playground by myself. Should I believe my own eyes, or should I believe Roy? I was uneasy and puzzled, and found it hard to make up my mind. But I think, if one wants to believe anything very much, one generally ends in doing so; and as I began by thinking it so unlike Roy to do such a thing, I went on to think that Roy would not do it—that he could not—that of course he could not—that he did not—and that nothing in the world could shake my good opinion of Harry Roy.

(To be continued.)

THE CASTLE AND THE COTTAGE.

LADY GERTRUDE lived in a beautiful castle, and prided herself very much upon her high position. One day Maria, a poor bricklayer's daughter, came to her and said, 'Oh, my lady, my father is very ill, and begs that you will come to him, as he has something very important to tell you.'



The lady answered scornfully, 'It must indeed be something very important that such a poor man has to say to me! Go away! I shall not go to your miserable cottage!' Poor Maria went away much disappointed, but after a little time came back again quite out of breath, and exclaimed, 'Oh, dear lady, do come quickly. The Countess, your late mother, during the war had a quantity of silver built up in a wall for safety, and ordered my father not to show

the place to any one but yourself when you were of age. Now he is very near death, and it will be too late if you do not come at once.'

The Lady Gertrude hastened as **quickly** as she could, but when she reached the cottage she found the poor man had just died. She was almost beside herself with regret and vexation. She left immediately, and ordered the walls of the castle to be broken in several places, but nowhere could any



trace of a treasure he found. Oh, how she regretted now, when it was too late, that she had through her pride and unkindness troubled the last moments of an honest man, and deprived herself of a large treasure, and so proved the truth of the words:—

A selfish heart, a soul of pride,
Both wounds itself and all beside.

‘AS CUNNING AS A FOX!’

THE dogs make music on the wind,
The fox is sadly pressed;
Behind is death, nor can he find
Before him any rest:

For, look ahead, yon springy turf
Breaks off with sudden dip,
And, far below, the rocks and surf,
And many a gallant ship.

Yet goaded on by hinder fears,
With all speed Reynard flies,
Till o'er the edge he disappears,
Before men's wondering eyes.

And so it is, two luckless hounds,
The foremost of them all,
Spring after him with eager bounds,
And perish in the fall.

Now as upon their homeward route
The hunters trotted back,
They thought a fox was too astute
For such a *cul-de-sac*.*

Another day, when hound and horse
Stirred Reynard from his hole,
He shaped the same unswerving course,
To the same fatal goal.

And could you think it? in a trice,
While dogs prepared to bite,
The fox sprang o'er the precipice,
And vanished out of sight;

Nor unavenged, for, well-a-day!
A trio of the pack
Were carried on by too much 'way,'
And vanished in his track.

But when men scrambled down the cliff,
To search among the rocks,
The dogs they found, quite dead and stiff,
But none could find the fox.

'Don't tell me foxes cannot fly,'
Said one astonished wag,
While scanning with his upturned eye
The beetling wall of crag;

'Or how on earth could Reynard pass
From yon tremendous shelf,
While dogs become a shapeless mass,
And never hurt himself?'

The puzzled huntsman cracked his thong,
And vowed, with angry face,
Such things were quite unknown among
The annals of the chase.

Now, when that slip 'twixt cup and lip
My humble muse relates,
Once more occurred, the second whip,
More subtle than his mates,

Found out the wily stratagem
By long and patient search,
How the deep fox had baffled them,
And left them in the lurch.

Just where the dizzy eye could see
The sheer descent beneath,
There was a twig, or little tree,
Scarred by some creature's teeth.

He grasped it in his iron grip,
Then, peering all about,
Exclaimed, 'As sure as I'm a whip
I've found my master out!'

* *Cul-de-sac*, a place from which there is no escape.

The traces of a fox's feet,
And other signs, in brief,
Showed how he gained a snug retreat,
While fox-hounds 'came to grief.'

Defly he seized the pliant twig,
Dropped caveward, safe and sound,
And there, all safe, cared not a fig
For any man or hound.

The hunter cut the branch in twain,
And tossed it o'er the brink;
With, 'When your lordship comes again
You'll follow that, I think.'

And such, alas! was Reynard's hap,
When next that way he ran;
For, never dreaming of the trap
Set by the artful man,

And, gaily laughing in his sleeve,
He played his famous card,
Fell, and was killed. Now, don't you grieve,
And think his lines were hard!

Yet, gentle Pity must not miss
The truth before her cast,
'How takers-in, by Nemesis'
Are taken in at last.'

G. S. O.

* 'Nemesis,' the Greek word for 'Fate.'

QUICK-FOOT.

THE Indians are a very sharp and clever nation. They have the power of following the slightest track left by man or beast, however careful they may have been to avoid pursuit.

I remember once hearing of a story which shows their great cleverness. An Indian, who had been out hunting, had killed a deer, from which he cut off a joint of venison, and hung it up as high as he could in his wigwam. He then went off into the forest to look at his traps. He was not long gone; but when he came back, to his surprise and anger he found that his fine joint had disappeared, and no trace of the thief was to be found,—at least, you nor I could not have noticed any, however carefully we might have looked. However, the Indian snatched up his tomahawk, and off he went in hot pursuit of the culprit, straight through the forest.

He had not gone far before he met a friendly white man (a trapper), who, seeing him going along with his eyes fixed on the ground, asked him what trail he was pursuing.

'I seek,' said Quick-Foot, 'a little old white man, with a small gun, who has got with him a little dog with a stumpy, bushy tail. This man is a robber, for he has entered my wigwam and stolen my venison. I will kill both him and his dog.'

'My brother, I saw not far from here just such a man. But how dost thou know him so well? for you have not yet seen him.'

'I am in haste, but if thou wilt know, listen: I found a pile of stones under the place where my venison was hanging. Had the robber not been short, he would not have required these to stand on. He was old, for his footsteps were close together.'

He was white, for his toes turned in, which an Indian's never do. If the gun had been long it would not have left a mark on the bark of the tree, as it did when it leant against it. So, thou seest, my brother, it was easy, having eyes, to detect the thief.

'But how did you know the ear, even to his tail?'

'Of what use would the eyes of Quick-Foot be, if they had not shown him the dog's feet were close together, as he walked on the sand; and that the short bushy tail measured itself as he sat wagging it, while his master was helping himself to my dinner? But farewell, I must hurry, or I shall not get back my venison from that white thief.'

With these words Quick-Foot hurried away, and was lost amid the deep foliage of a Western forest.

H. F. (*one of the small fry.*)

THE COTTAGE AT ST. PRIVAT.



FROM the commencement of the Franco-Prussian War I belonged to the Volunteer Helpers of Cologne. I had therefore every chance of becoming acquainted with the horrors of war. I will not lift the veil from before those pictures of blood,—I try to forget them myself: one only will I picture to my reader.

One day I saw in the large hall, which was used for our hospital, a young French peasant in a blue blouse.

He sat in a corner of the room silently brooding over his trouble, and gazing gloomily down on the ground. His hands were clasped, and it was rather a nameless agony than bitterness which was expressed in his features.

'A plunderer of dead bodies!' said the soldier to me who was placed as sentry over him. I approached the young fellow, and spoke to him in French.

'Where do you come from?' No answer.

'Of what are you accused?' Then he raised his head and gazed at me with such a painfully sad expression, that I felt much compassion for him, and immediately afterwards he burst into a fearful, almost insane laughter.

'Do you want to know why I am here?' he asked, and covered his face with his clasped hands to hide his tears. He could weep then; he was not utterly hardened. I sat down by his side. The peasant might be about twenty; he was strongly built, and seemed to have received some education.

'I live in St. Privat,' he said; 'our village is very small, but we lived comfortably: we had two cows and some land. I was the only son of my parents. My mother lay dying, my old father was lame and could not leave his wheeled chair. I attended to the house and the field. The war broke out, and we had much to suffer. The hope that we Frenchmen would be victorious failed; after the first battles, all fled as quickly as they could. Suddenly we heard, "The Prussians are coming!" The whole village fled into the woods, and each one saved what he could. I could not leave my house, I dared not leave my old sick parents helpless behind. My mother was lying

in her last agony. I must attend to her, and wished to close her eyes. I felt I must remain, whatever happened. The Prussians did not keep us long waiting. The cannons roared, the Prussians were curious at finding the village empty. I was soon discovered. The cows with whose milk I kept my poor mother alive were led out of the stable. They ordered me to serve them as a guide for at least one day. I resisted, I begged, I implored them; in vain. I must lead a foraging party, and my heart felt as if it would break. I had to take a rapid farewell of my poor parents, for the pistols at my forehead left me no time for thought, and I promised them to return very soon. That very day, about noon, I heard that a terrible battle had taken place in our neighbourhood. The artillery roared and crashed, the whole country round about was an immense battle-field, and I trembled for my poor parents, who I knew must be in the very thick of the fight.

'In the evening I succeeded in escaping; I ran as fast as my legs would carry me. I dashed over dead and wounded, and the burning villages lighted up my way. Alas! sir, I could scarcely find our village, it was a heap of ruins. Part of the church was still standing, and a few houses; the rest were destroyed by shells. With quickly beating heart, and holding my breath, I approached the spot where my home had stood, and I found it no longer. The cottage was only a smoking heap of stones. I roared aloud in sorrow and fury; I thought I should have expired on the spot, everything went round and round before my eyes, and with the shriek, "They are burned!" I sank down and dug with my hands into the hot heap the grave of my parents! Suddenly I was dragged up, beaten, and kicked; I was a plunderer of dead bodies, it was said, and must be carried off. I could not answer, speech failed me, I wished for death; so I am here now and await my sentence.'

The honest peasant again burst into tears, it had done him good thus to ease his heart. I comforted him as well as I could, and I also succeeded in obtaining a release for the poor fellow in a short time.

J. F. C.

CHALK.

IF a small piece of chalk is moistened and rubbed on a slip of glass, and placed under a powerful microscope, myriads of very small things are seen. Some are fragments of larger things, but the greater part consist of the tiny skeletons and shells of what are called animalcules. Much of the chalk consists, also, of round grains, which when broken down are found to contain other grains arranged in circles round a centre. These are all remnants of very small creatures, which were once alive. So small were they, that 10,000 of them placed in a row would not make up an inch in length. The shapes of the little shells are very pretty, and they are beautifully marked with dots and lines, so as to form very interesting objects under a good microscope. Every piece of chalk contains a vast quantity of these things, and also grains of what is called carbonate of lime.—*From the World of Wonders.*



The Cottage at St. Privat.

Chatterbox.



The Student's Bear.

THE STUDENT AND HIS BEAR.



N a certain memorable day in 1847 a large hamper reached Oxford, per Great Western Railway, and was in due time delivered, according to its direction, at Christ Church, consigned to a gentleman well known in the University for his fondness for natural history. He opened the hamper, and the moment the lid was removed out jumped a creature about the size of an English sheep-dog, covered with long shaggy hair, of a brownish colour. This was a young bear, born on Mount Lebanon, in Syria, a few months before, who had now arrived to receive his education at our learned university. The moment he was released from the hamper he made the most of his liberty, and the door of the room being open he rushed down the cloisters. Service was going on in the chapel, and, attracted by the pealing organ, or some other motive, he made at once for the chapel. Just as he arrived at the door the stout verger happened to come thither from within, and the moment he saw the impish-looking creature that was running into his domain he made a tremendous flourish with his silver 'poker,' and darting into the chapel, he put himself in a tall pew, the door of which he bolted. Tiglath Pileser (as the bear was called, being scared by the 'poker,' turned from the chapel, and scampered about the large quadrangle. After a sharp chase a gown was thrown over Tig, and he was with difficulty secured. During the struggle he got one of the fingers of his new master into his mouth, and began vigorously sucking it, with that peculiar muzzling noise for which bears are remarkable. Thus was he led back to the student's room, walking all the way on his hind legs, and sucking the finger with all his might. A collar was put round his neck, and Tig became a prisoner. His good nature and amusing tricks soon made him a prime favourite with the undergraduates; a cap and gown were made, attired in which (to the great scandal of the dons), he accompanied his master to breakfasts and wine-parties, where he contributed greatly to the amusement of the company, and partook of good things, his favourite viands being muffins and ices. He was in general of an amiable disposition, but subject to fits of rage, during which his violence was extreme; but a kind word and a finger to suck soon brought him round. He was most impatient of solitude, and would cry for hours when left alone, particularly if it was dark. On one occasion he was kept in college till after the gates were locked, and there was no possibility of getting him out without the porter seeing him, when there would have been a fine of ten shillings to pay the next morning. Tig was therefore tied up in the courtyard, but his cries were so great that his master had him brought into his rooms and chained to the bed-post, where he remained quiet till daylight; then he woke his master by licking his face, and presently put his hind legs under the blankets.—*Cassell's Paper.*

MR. RAPID.



HAT! you here yet, old fellow?' said Jack Rapid to Sam the ostler, who had taught him how to clean a horse and put him in a carriage when Jack was a dirty little urchin, picking up a few stray coppers in the race-week, and at the fair-time, and on those days when the 'Angel' was full of company, and farmers' carts nearly filled the inn yard. 'You here yet, in this dull old place?'

The ostler at first did not recognise his pupil Jack. How should he? What resemblance was there between a lanky and ragged little lad, and the heavy swell who now accosted him? Old Sam took a careful inventory of all his fine clothes, and probably cast up the sum total of their value, ere he replied, 'Yes, I'm here, that's certain; but who you are I can't make out for the life of me. You are not unlike Tom Henson, who went away six or seven years ago, but they do say he was drowned, poor fellow! But he was rather stouter than you. You're never he, come back with pockets full of gold from the Gold Coast, are you?'

'Tom Henson? No! I'm Jack Rapid; now John Dashwood Rapid, Esquire, of Flyaway Hall. Don't you remember me many years ago, when I used to come and help you on busy days?'

'You Jack Rapid?' said the old ostler, taking a step backward to consider the speaker from a new point of view. 'Why, how can it be that little —'

'Stay, Sam,' said Mr. Rapid. 'I know what you are going to say, and I had rather say it for you. How can it be that that little dirty boy has become such a gentleman?'

'Well,' said Sam, 'I don't want to be rude; but when I remember what you were, I do wonder how you have mounted upwards. Why, your horses are worth eighty guineas a-piece!' continued Sam, with an admiring glance at the animals.

'Yes, Sam, times have changed—thank my stars for that. Do you know I went at last to London, and got a good place in a grand West-end hotel, as waiter in a billiard-room; but that would never have put me where I am, had I got a guinea where I got a threepenny bit. No; an old screw of a relation, named Wood, died two years back, and left me his savings, because he was my godfather, and I was named John after him. And now I live at Flyaway Hall, and drive, you see, good cattle, and spend my money like a gentleman, and show my gratitude to old Wood by calling myself Dashwood. Clever contrivance that! don't you think so? And, Sam, I'm willing to be a gentleman to you, if you'll come and be my head-groom.'

'Flyaway Hall?' echoed Sam. 'Why, you don't mean to say you live at Flyaway Hall?'

'Yes, I do, Sam, indeed; and why should I not?'

'Well,' answered Sam, 'I don't know why, if you've plenty of money; but, bless me! Flyaway Hall must take a mint of cash for coal, if one is to

go by the chimneys. And it has ruined two or three since I first heard of it. There was Lord Oakes, well do I remember going to his sale. A great auctioneer from London was talking and hammering for three or four days, and the wine and cigars fetched enough to stock a farm; yet my lord only paid his creditors six-and-ninience in the pound.

Mr. Rapid seemed rather disconcerted by these remarks. It was not pleasant to think of poor Lord Oakes floundering in the deep waters of shame and ruin; but Mr. Rapid laughed the thought away, and giving his white beaver a jaunty toss, he took out a cigar and began to smoke.

'Well but, Sam,' continued Mr. Rapid, 'will you leave this mouldy old inn and come and live with me? For auld lang syne we'll take a cup o' kindness yet, and say "Good wages and light work." By the look of things you must be doing a seedy business here. My pair seem to be the only horses you've had in the stable to-day. Come now, out with the secret! How many nags have bitten your corn since last Wednesday—a week ago? Why,' said Mr. Rapid, laughing at his own conceit, 'you've got your hands in your trowsers-pockets, as if they were at home there, and had nothing else to do!' And Mr. Rapid tittered away at his own wit.

'Never mind,' said Sam, somewhat huffed at Mr. Rapid's insolent allusion to the declining fortunes of the old 'Angel,' but pulling his hands out of his pockets at the same time. 'Never mind, sir, we are doing well enough for my contentment, and I must decline with thanks your well-meant offer to find me easy work and good pay at Flyaway Hall.'

'Well, every man to his taste,' exclaimed Mr. Rapid; 'but remember, Sam, in spite of your refusal, which is rather affronting, I must say, Flyaway Hall will be always open to you. When you have got down to your last shilling, I'll be your friend for the sake of old times. I can always do with an extra hand, and I think of increasing my stud. One knows, you see, so many good fellows, and one likes to see their happy faces about one, and they are generally as poor as rats; so I have to mount them all, and the rogues are not content unless they have the best horses and are in at the death.'

'Ah,' said Sam, turning away his face, and speaking low, 'they won't be in at your death, depend upon it.'

'My death? What do you mean?' asked Mr. Rapid, rather sharply.

'I mean, sir, your ruin; which, if all you say is true, is not very far distant. Your friends will suck you dry, like the oranges you used to be so fond of, when you could get them, and then they will leave you. Flyaway Hall will want Mr. Hammer again, probably in a year or two, and if I leave the old inn on the moor another will step into my shoes, and when I want them again I shall have to ask in vain. No, Mr. Rapid, I'm not a betting man, but I'll wager a crown you are in the court, and paying your angry creditors so much in the pound, before I have to part with my Pitt guinea.'

'Your Pitt guinea!' said Mr. Rapid, now getting seriously vexed, and about to order his pair to be put into his fashionable drag and to summon his smart tiger 'Tom from the tap-room fire; 'what on earth is a Pitt guinea?'

'It is a guinea,' answered Sam, 'which the great statesman, Billy Pitt, as he was familiarly called, gave my father one day, when he was hurrying in hot haste to London on important business. My father's manners and readiness pleased Mr. Pitt, and he gave him a guinea, which my father declared should be the very last piece of money he would ever spend. It has come to me, and I am determined I will never run so near aground as to need that guinea to float me. That guinea, Mr. Rapid, has made me a careful man, and I am grieved to think you are throwing away with both hands a fortune upon fellows who don't really care a pinch of snuff for you. Let me beg you, as an old friend, to leave Flyaway Hall and live in a smaller and more lucky house, else you will be limping up to the despised 'Angel' in a few years' time, with rags on your back, to beg a crust and a job of old Sam.'

Mr. Rapid could hear no more such doleful forebodings, but hurried away to pay his bill, and to chat with the more congenial landlord. The saucy tiger soon appeared, and grumbled at everything in the stable except Sam, who looked too big and resolute to insult. By-and-by the smart turn-out bowled away; the landlord bowed, and thanked Mr. Rapid for his patronage; and Sam remained more or less absent all the day.

In less than the time he had fixed, Flyaway Hall was again the scene of Mr. Hammer's toil. Again all that valuable household furniture, pictures, wines, &c. went to the highest bidder, and Mr. Rapid disappeared from view. Some time after a gaunt, emaciated man, knocked at Sam's door. Of course we know who it was—no one less than Rapid, broken, weary, dying. He had no friends; those who had helped to ruin him were scattered every man to his own, and no one cared for poor Jack Rapid's soul. So he bethought him of the kind-hearted old ostler, who had befriended him in the adversities of his youth, and had given him the best of advice in his mad career of prosperity. In the house of that good Samaritan poor Jack Rapid breathed his last, conscious of his folly, and taught by Sam to go as a penitent to the Cross in which the broken-hearted find rest and hope.

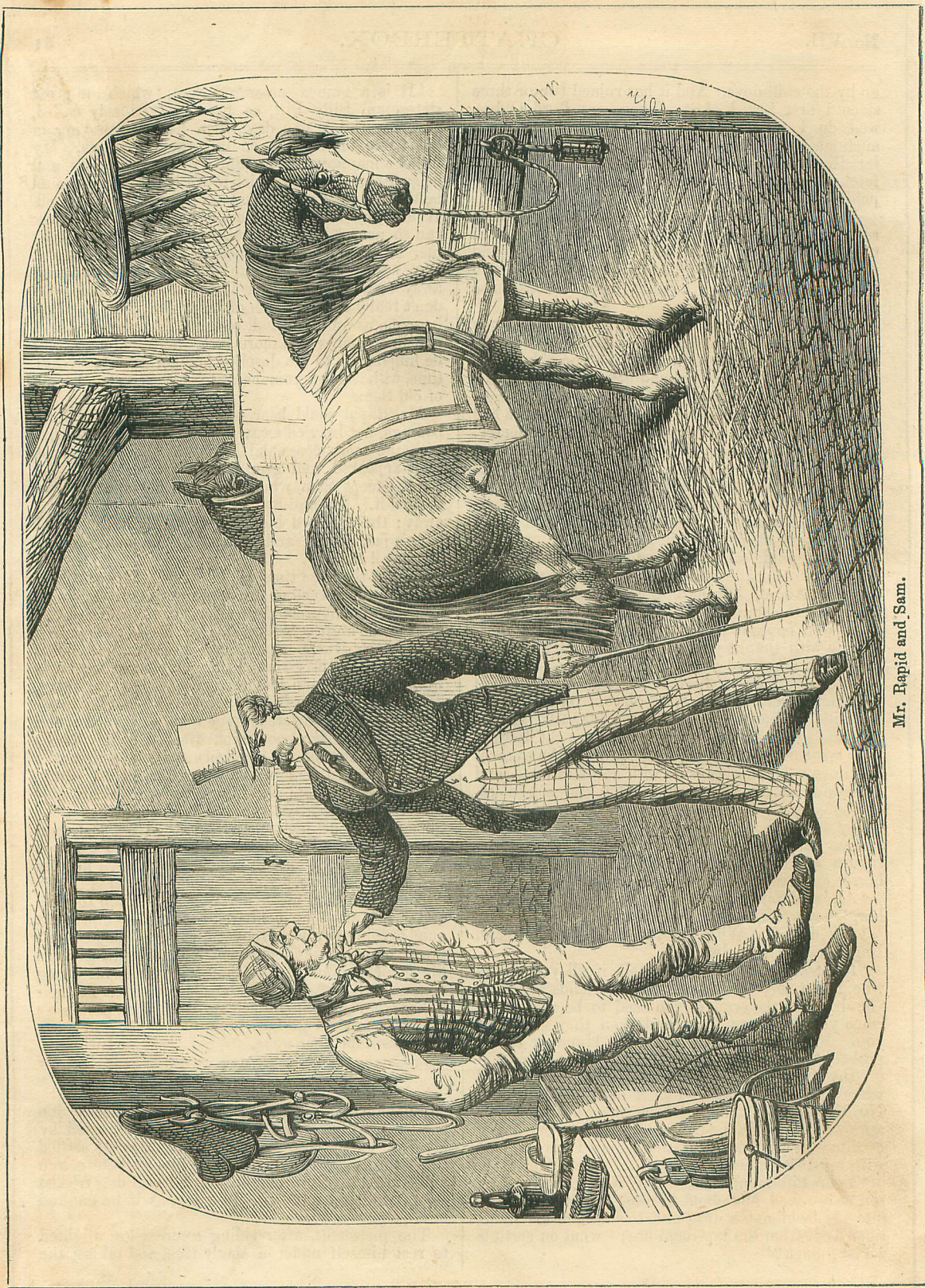
And when Sam meets a young man given to loose and lavish ways he contrives to conduct him some quiet evening to the churchyard, where, beside Rapid's grave, he points the moral which the prodigal's short life supplied; and often so sharply, that several young men can thankfully date the abandonment of their follies from the still and solemn hour when old Sam's words seemed to go into their very souls, and made them consider their ways.

G. S. O.

A FAITHFUL DOG.

A FRENCH merchant, having some money due to him, set out on horseback accompanied by his dog, on purpose to receive it. Having settled the business he tied the bag of money before him and started to return home. His faithful dog frisked round the horse and barked for joy, as if he entered into his master's feelings.

The merchant, after riding some miles, alighted to rest himself under a shady tree, and taking the



Mr. Rapid and Sam.



bag of money in his hand, he laid it down by his side. On mounting again he forgot his bag. The dog perceiving this, ran to fetch it; but it was too heavy for him to drag along. He then ran after his master, and, by barking, tried to remind him of his mistake. The merchant did not understand these signs; but the dog went on with his efforts, and after trying in vain to stop the horse, at last began to bite his heels.

The thought now struck the merchant that the faithful creature had gone mad; and so, in crossing a brook, he turned back to look if the dog would drink. The animal was too intent on its object to think of itself; and it continued to bark and bite with greater violence than before.

'Alas!' cried the merchant, 'it must be so! my poor dog is certainly mad; what must I do? I must kill him; I may myself become the victim if I

spare him.' With these words he drew a pistol from his pocket, and took aim. He turned away in agony as he fired; but his aim was too sure. The poor dog fell weltering in his blood; and his master, unable to bear the sight, spurred on his horse. 'I am most unfortunate,' said he to himself. 'I had almost rather have lost my money than my dog.' Saying this, he stretched out his hand to grasp his treasure. It was missing, no bag was to be found! In an instant he opened his eyes to his rashness and folly. 'Wretch that I am! why could I not understand the signs which my faithful friend gave me?'

Instantly he turned his horse, and rode back to the place where he had stopped. He saw the marks of blood as he proceeded, but in vain did he look for his dog; he was not to be seen on the road. At last he reached the spot where he had rested. But what were his feelings? The poor dog had crawled, all bloody as he was, to the forgotten bag, and in the agonies of death he lay watching beside it. When he saw his master, he still showed his joy by the wagging of his tail. He tried to rise, but his strength was gone; and after stretching out his tongue to lick the hand that was now fondling him in an agony of regret, he closed his eyes in death.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 43.)

CHAPTER VII.



HAVE said that I was too much taken up with Roy to go often on Saturdays with Bertie to meet little Amy; and also I told you that Bertie always went, and that he had become great friends with the little girl. Indeed, I sometimes used to think that it was a pity Bertie was not a girl, as he was almost too gentle and tender-hearted for a boy.

There were two wet Saturdays in May when he could not go to the bay, and there came two more when he went and the little girl was not there. The servant even did not come to fetch the butter, so Bertie did not hear how Amy was, or whether it was illness that kept her away. So Bertie began to get very anxious, and he asked me whether I would come with him one day into Saltby, and try and find out where she lived, and why she had left off coming. So the first Saturday in June we set off together on what I was afraid was rather a wild-goose-chase, as Bertie had never found out Amy's surname in all their long talks together, though he had heard volumes about her mother and her brother Dick, and of her long painful illness, and of her few amusements. He also only knew that she lived somewhere in Seaview Crescent, but he did not know which number it was; and as there were thirty houses in the Crescent we might be ever so long finding it. As we went along Bertie told me a great deal about her and her brother.

'He must be a wonderfully good fellow,' Bertie said. 'She seems fonder of him than of any one else, even than her mother. She says her mother is so busy always and so tired, and goes to sleep sometimes

just when Amy is talking to her; and she cries when Amy is in pain, and that makes the pain worse; and she scolds Sarah, and lets the door slam: but Dick never does anything wrong, and is always gentle and patient. She told me one day that she didn't know if I should think him good-looking, perhaps I might not, but she says she thinks her guardian angel has a face like his. He goes to school somewhere, and she says he is so clever that no one can come near him; but he often comes home to see her, and she is always better when he is at home. But here we are at Seaview Crescent.'

'Now then,' said I, 'what's to be done to find the right number? Shall I begin at one end and you at the other, and knock at all the doors and ask? We'd better look sharp or we shall never have done.'

But we were saved from this trouble by the appearance of a girl at the other end of the Crescent, who we at once recognised as Sarah. She turned down into the area of No. 6, and had gone into the house before we could reach her. There were bills with 'To Let' on them, stuck in both the dining-room and drawing-room windows.

'Perhaps they've gone away,' I suggested, 'as it's all to let.'

'Oh no! I think they always live at Saltby. Amy never spoke of any other home, and once or twice I fancied from what she said that her mother let lodgings. But, anyhow, Sarah is there, so we shall hear something of her.'

Accordingly we knocked at the door, and a minute or two afterwards it was opened by Sarah herself.

'Well, I never did! if it isn't you two young gents! Well, to be sure! why, it was only just this minute that Miss Amy was a-talking of you, a-wondering if she'd ever see you again. But I never thought as you'd be coming here, and says I to myself it's not likely as she'll be going over to Seaciff again, poor lamb!'

'Has she been so ill, then?'

'Ill! ay, that she have, and is so still for that matter, though I'll not say as she isn't better to-day. Why, there was night after night as missus and me never had our clothes off our backs, a-watching every breath as might have been her last. Here, step into the parlour a minute, for we've got no lodgers now, and a good thing, though the missus do fret about it, for whatever we should have done this last fortnight, with Miss Amy that ill, and the bells always a-ringing, and meals at all hours, and noise constant, I can't imagine. But there! I do run on, and I dare say you'd like to see the child. Missus has gone up to lie down, as she's regular worn out, Master Dick he's here for the afternoon, along of its being a holiday at the school, or I'd never be able to stand here a-talking to you gents; but if the child's with Master Dick no one need be troubling.'

'Perhaps we'd better come in another day,' said I. 'We only came to ask how she was.'

'Now don't you be thinking of such a thing. She'll be that pleased to see you as it'll do her more good than all the medicine. She thinks a terrible deal of that doll. It's never been off her pillow all the time, though not so nice as it were at first, through having some castor-oil spilt over its frock. You won't mind stepping downstairs, will you now? She

always sleeps down there in missus's parlour, through the stairs being narrow and twisty in parts.'

So we followed Sarah down the dark stairs to the kitchen-floor, and through a door into a dark little room, with its window looking into the area. There was a little bed near the window, and in it lay Amy asleep, as white as the pillow under her head, with the long lashes looking as if they were pencilled on the waxen cheek, and a weary drawn look of pain about her mouth. On the pillow, close by her, lay Cowsie, but not by any means as lovely as when she came out of Bertie's box. There was a table drawn close by the bedside with a few roses in a glass, and a cup, and some medicine-bottles, and some books and writing materials, and by the table, with his back turned to the door, sat a boy. He was sitting at the table as if he had been writing, but the child had fallen asleep with both her little frail hands clasped round one of his, and he was sitting quite still, doing nothing, for fear of waking her. There was something familiar to me in the first sight of his back as we came in; but I had not a moment of doubt, for he turned his head at the sound of our footsteps, holding up his other hand for silence, and I recognised at once—who do you think? Why, it was Hodson! I don't know which was the most startled and taken aback, he or we. He turned as red as fire, and gave a great start that half woke the little girl, who moaned and turned on the pillow. 'Dick,' she said, 'don't go away.' 'I'm not going,' he said: 'never fear.' And then he signed to us to sit down and be quiet, and Bertie and I sat down on the chairs nearest the door as still as mice.

So this was brother Dick, who was so superior to every one else: so good, and patient, and gentle; so clever too, and whose face was like a guardian angel's! It seemed impossible that any one could look at Hodson in that way. I could almost have laughed at the little girl's foolishness in seeing an angel in that sabby, mean-looking fellow. Now if it had been Roy, it would have been different. He seemed to have been writing, and that big book at his side was a dictionary: he must have been doing his verses: this was where he came in his long walk; it was here that the verses got done so well, sitting by the side of the little sick girl. He could not have got any help here anyhow; in that I had done him an injustice: but still there was nothing to make me change my opinion about Hodson in other matters. I wondered what Bertie thought of it. Certainly Hodson did not look quite such a cad here as he did at school; his hand on the bed, that was clasped by the child's hand, was dirty, and the nails bitten; but it looked so patient that one hardly noticed anything amiss; and his eyes were as weak and blinking as ever, but still there was no denying that they looked awfully kind. We sat still for some time in silence, till at last Hodson drew his hand very gently away from the little girl's and softly collected his books, and got up and beckoned us to follow him out of the room. When we were in the passage he said,—

'She's not slept for such a time it seems a pity to wake her, unless you wish it very much; and we ought to be off if we want to be in time for the calling over.'

'Oh, don't think of waking her!' Bertie said; 'we're only so glad she is better.'

Then Hodson called Sarah to go down, and we set off on our way back. There was an awkward silence at first—none of us very well knowing what to say: but I was the first to break it, coming blundering out with something awkward as usual.

'I say, you know, Hodson, we weren't spying about after you: we hadn't a notion that Amy was your sister, or anything, you know.'

'I didn't think you were spying,' Hodson said. 'I don't know why any one should spy about me; and I didn't know it was you who had been so kind to Amy, though I might have guessed. I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you.'

'Oh, bother it!' I broke in: 'we don't want any one to be obliged to us.'

'You won't mention, perhaps, that you've seen me,' he went on, awkwardly; 'the other fellows don't know of my living down there in Saltby.'

'I don't suppose any one would care to hear if we had seen you, nor where you live,' I answered, crossly; 'but, of course, we won't speak of it, if it's a secret. Come, I think I'll go home over the fields, it's baking hot in the road.'

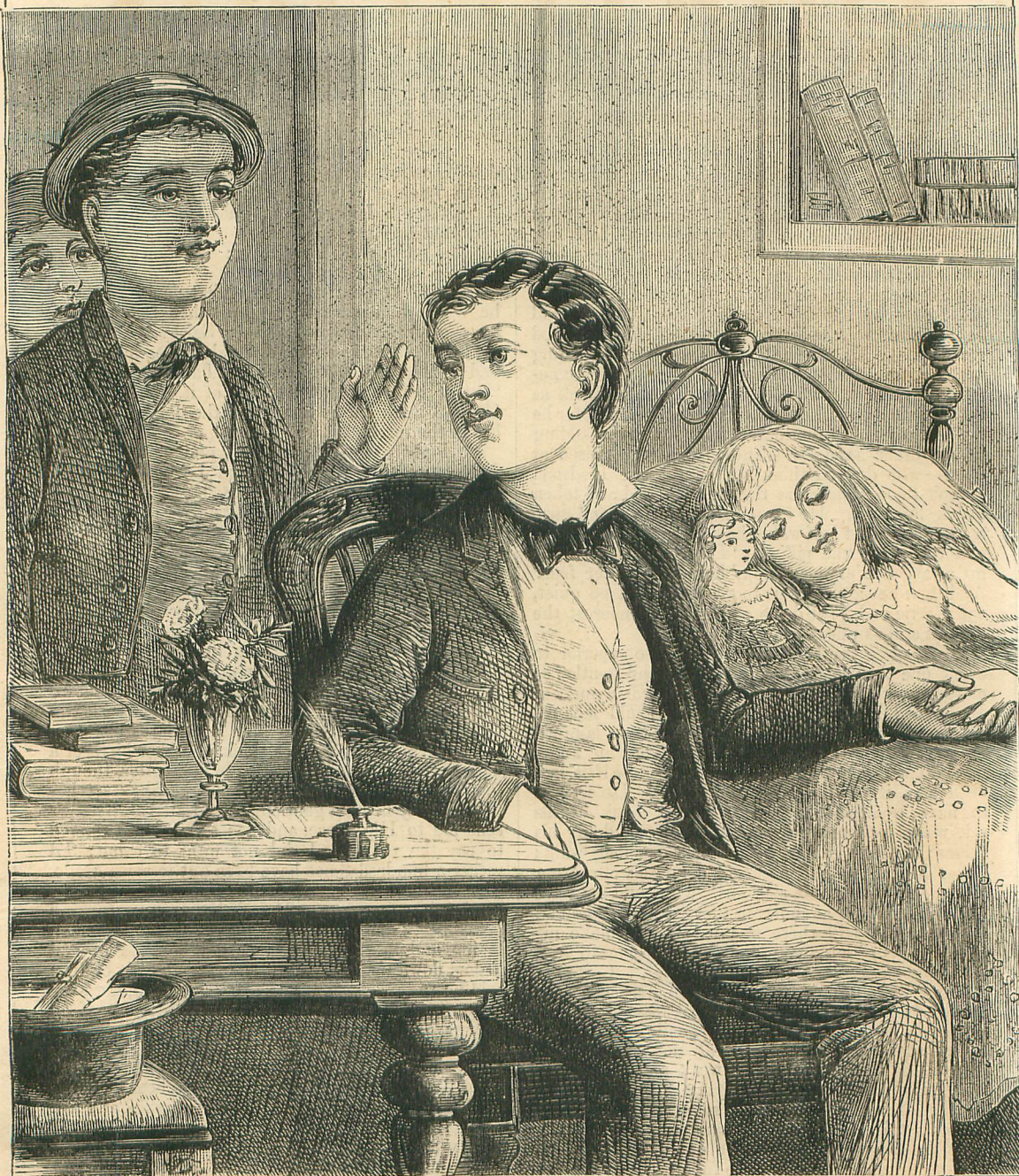
So I got over the next stile, and quite expected Bertie to follow me; but when I looked back he was still on the road with Hodson, and in close conversation. I suppose Hodson found it easier to talk to Bertie—he was not so rough and rude as I was; and before they reached Highmore he had told him a lot about himself, and how he came to school there. He told Bertie how poor his mother was—left a widow when Amy was only a few weeks' old, and what a hard, struggling life they had had since.

'She's not a fine lady, you know,' he said: 'of course, I know that—at least not a lady-born like your mother is, I suppose, and most of the other fellows' mothers; but there is not one of you has got a better mother than mine. She'd give her heart's blood for me and Amy; and I don't think a higher birth or a better education could have made her better, though they might have made her happier. She's set her heart on my being a gentleman, and that's why she's sent me to Highmore, and has scraped and starved to pay the money. I did not want to come: I'd rather a hundred times have been put to some trade, where I could have earned some money after a time: but her heart was set on it, and there was no turning her. I told her I hadn't the making of a gentleman in me, and that I should only get laughed at and looked down upon, just as it has turned out; but she said no one need know where I came from, not even the master himself: so when she came first of all she gave an address in London, where my uncle lives, and to this day the Doctor does not know that I live in Saltby. I didn't like this either, for it seemed so underhand; but I couldn't bear to cross her: and then she heard of this scholarship, and if I can get it it will go a good way towards my bill next year.'

This and a great deal more Hodson told to Bertie—not, of course, all just as I have put it down, but by little bits: and Bertie told it to me afterwards.

'And, Tom,' Bertie said, 'he says he's so sorry you dislike him; for he should like to have your good opinion.'

(To be continued.)



Amy asleep in the little bed near the window.

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Chatterbox.

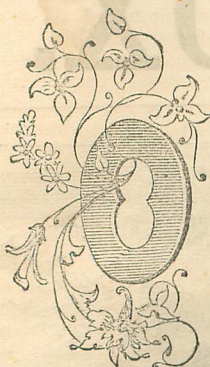


"Hullo, Mr. Merryman! whose donkey may that be?"

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 55.)

CHAPTER VIII.



ONLY a week to the examinations—only a week to the decision about the exhibition—only ten days to breaking-up and going home! I felt when the scholarship was once decided I could afford to like Hodson better, to think of his kindness and patience, and to forget his cheating and lying; till then I was Roy's partisan and nothing else. But when

Roy had won the victory, I should feel sorry for Hodson's disappointment (for, of course, it was a great matter to him to get the scholarship), and I should not feel as if liking Hodson were being untrue to Roy.

That last week the half-holiday was to be on Wednesday, instead of Saturday. On the Tuesday, just after dinner, as we were all out in the cricket-field, we heard a bugle sounding in the road, and there was a general rush to the wall to see what was going to happen. It was a circus going down to Saltby: it had been at Marston the night before, which was the next village along the road beyond Highmore; and they were going down into Saltby in grand style, to attract as many people as possible on the road. First of all came a large break, containing the band, playing 'See the conquering hero comes,' till the trombone was black in the face, and the drum looked ready to burst. Then followed, quite undisturbed by the uproar, a large elephant; its little sharp eyes and restless trunk turning about on the look-out for buns. Sitting astride on a gaudy, red-and-yellow saddle-cloth, was a little black boy, with a woolly head and a turban and green umbrella. As a contrast to this followed Mr. Merryman on a donkey, with his face turned to the tail, and a cap and bells; and then what was called the Car of Beauty, a magnificent erection, all painted green and yellow, and drawn by four piebald horses, with flowing tails, and manes tied up with blue ribbons. A fat, red-faced woman in a crown, and glittering but scanty robes, reclined high aloft in rather a perilous and tottering position; and two little girls, in very short petticoats and spangled wings, with large white shoes and long pink stockings, very black at the knees, supported her on either side. Then came four horses abreast, supporting a sort of platform, on which were the 'Arabian Athletes' in a pile, with arms and legs sticking out in all sorts of unexpected directions; and then an awful and mysterious-looking van, which contained, as a large placard announced, 'twenty Ashantee prisoners, including two of King Koffee's sons, brought home straight from Coomassie by Sir Garnet Wolseley;' and a dreadful business it must have been bringing them, judging from the frightful yells and clanking of chains from within. Just after the elephant passed the playground wall Mr. Merryman's donkey was attracted by a thistle in the hedge, and as Mr. Merryman was not in a

position to see where he was going to, the whole procession was brought to a halt for a minute or two.

Blake was astride on the wall next me, and he shouted out,—

'Hullo, Mr. Merryman! whose donkey may that be?'

'Whose donkey? Why, mine to be sure. Did you think it was your little brother?'

There was a roar at this, but Blake was not to be caught.

'Do you mean to say that the donkey belongs to you? Well, that is a wonderful instance of self-possession!'

This turned the laugh against Mr. Merryman, but he got the last word after all, for he got off the donkey and looked attentively at its head and then at its tail.

'Well,' he said, 'now I come to look at it, there's no likeness to you at all, either head or tail. And do you know why—ch? Why, because you're no end of an ass.'

'Come, Mr. Merryman,' a voice called from behind, 'we can't stop for you all day.' And so the procession moved on.

After the Ashantee car there was a lot of vans, with placards of the 'Great Asiatic Hippodrome,' and pictures of scenes in the arena. All the horses looked very sleek and unnatural, and curved their necks and went ambling along, setting down their feet to a sort of dancing measure. A rabble of children brought up the rear, gradually increasing as they went on, till it must have been an army when they reached Saltby.

When the procession was nearly out of sight a very small pony-carriage, drawn by two little cream-coloured ponies, came up and drove in at the front-gate. A man with a very shiny, tall hat, and trousers very tight at the knees, got out and went in, while a groom in smart livery walked the ponies about outside, and at last brought them round to the playground wall and began to talk to us.

'Pretty little pair, ain't they now? Couldn't get such another nowhere. Princess of Wales wanted to have 'em last year; she sent for the guvnor, she did, and begged and prayed, but it wasn't no use. "No, your royal ighness," says the guvnor, "don't go for to ask it. I'd cut off my right 'and, and welcome, but my ponies is too dear to me." That's the guvnor as has gone in to see your guvnor, to know what tickets he'll take. Schools arf-price, you know, and instructors of youth, free, gratis, for nothing. It's a rare chance for the Saltby folks, and no mistake. Them Ashantees will 'ave to be took to the Tower of London next week, to be kept there in cages, for there ain't nowhere else strong enough to hold 'em; they're that strong, as Sir Garnet told the guvnor hisself when he asked him to keep 'em for him a bit. "And mind," says he, "as you looks arter 'em sharp, and gives 'em plenty to eat as has been used to human flesh three times a-day reg'lar;" and what they costs in raw beef-steaks and mutton-chops I shouldn't like for to mention!'

Just then Roy came up to the wall.

'Hullo!' he said to the groom, 'I know your face well enough. You used to be in the stables at Roy Court.'

'Well, if it ain't Master 'Arry! I'd have known you among a thousand! And you'll not be forgetting Jim Stokes as broke in the little grey pony myself, as was the first you ever got astride on!'

'What made you leave the Court?'

'Well, you see, Master 'Arry, I wanted to better myself, as they say, and old Giles he were such a Turk—asking your pardon, as knowing as he's an old servant, and thought 'ighly on; but he were that peppery as there wasn't no standing him, and folks likes a bit of liberty, and one sees a deal of life going about with a circus.'

Then he began talking about the circus, and ended up with offering to show Roy all over the concern, and give him a peep at the Ashantees in a private sort of way.

'We're not agoing to show till to-morrow evening, as there's a deal to be done in one way and another; but if you and any of your friends would like to come and have a look round to-morrow afternoon, you could see a good deal as ain't shown to the public in general. You just ask any one as you sees about for Jim Stokes, and they'll tell you where to find me fast enough. But there's the gunvor; so good-day to you, and I'll be on the look-out about three to-morrow.'

There were lots of fellows who would have liked to go with Roy, but he only offered to take me, and I was awfully pleased to go. We planned to start directly after dinner, so as to get as long as possible at the circus, and we made up our minds to find out all about the Ashantees, for of course we did not believe half that Jim Stokes or the placards said of them. When I told Bertie I was almost afraid he might be disappointed at not coming with Roy and me, but I found that he had another plan, and that was, to go with Hodson to see Amy, and he would rather do this than go to a hundred circuses.

CHAPTER IX.

It was a beautiful morning next day, and having dreamed all night of the circus, I got up with my head full of it. I am sure that Roy was as full of it as I was, only he pretended not to care at all about it, and laughed at me because I was so excited. Bertie too was quite as pleased with his plan, and I suppose Hodson felt the same, more especially as Bertie told me that he had heard from his mother that Amy was not so well again, and was longing to see him; but it was impossible to judge anything from Hodson's face, for it always looked the same whether he was pleased or not. So you can fancy what our feelings were when, after lessons were over, and we were just expecting the gong to go for dinner, when there was only another hour between us and the Ashantees, the Doctor's bell rang for silence, and he said he had a few words to say before we dispersed. Well, he was a long time getting it out, and he used no end of fine words and round-about expressions; but the bottom of the matter was, that there was very bad, malignant scarlet fever down in Salthby, which had caused a great many deaths lately, and that we were none of us to go beyond the turnpike on the Salthby road. He said a lot about it only being a few days to the holidays and of his

anxiety to avoid infection, not only for ourselves, but for fear of our taking it home to our families. He also said that he never liked the boys to be much in Salthby, and that at one time there had been a rule against it, and that he was sorry that it was broken through, as he found of late some of the boys had been there a great deal on half-holidays; and he thought very likely next term he should renew the rule; however, he should reserve this for consideration, only till the end of the term he entirely forbid any of us to go into Salthby on any pretext whatever, and he should punish severely any disobedience.

This speech of the Doctor's was received in dead silence, but as soon as he left the schoolroom a chorus of complaint burst out. I don't believe half the fellows really wanted to go to Salthby, but to hear them talk you would have thought that the whole school had important engagements there for that very afternoon. I cannot tell you how disappointed I was. I did not like to look at Roy, and I kept away from him at dinner; but when I looked down the table at him he was laughing and talking as if nothing had happened, so I supposed that he really had not cared about it as I did. Bertie looked very disappointed, but Hodson was always so gloomy that one could not see any difference.

After dinner I was hanging about in the playground, uncertain what to do, when I heard Roy calling me. He was getting over the gate into the cricket-field, and he called out, 'Here, Tom, come along.'

'Where are you going?' I called back, as I went towards him.

'For a walk, to be sure. I suppose we can go to Marston, if we can't to Salthby.'

He looked so jolly and smiling that I felt ashamed of feeling so cross and sulky, and I went with him across the fields in the direction of Marston, and we were soon out of sight of the school and the other boys.

'Come, Tom,' he said, all at once putting his arm through mine, 'we must look alive or we shall be late.'

'Late?' I said; 'what for?'

'Why, Jim Stokes, to be sure!'

'But we're going to Marston?'

'Not a bit of it! we're going to Salthby, round by Five-elm Farm. It's a good step round, but that can't be helped.'

'You're never going to Salthby after all the Doctor said?'

Roy laughed and mimicked my tone.

'You're never going to stop away just because of what that old woman said?'

'But the fever, Roy?'

'But the circus, Tom? Come, now! you're never such a duffer as to think that the Doctor meant what he said for us? It's only for the little chaps.'

'But he said it to all of us.'

'Oh, yes! of course he meant it for any boys who hadn't had scarlet fever. It's all fiddlesticks about infection; every one has scarlet fever and measles, and whooping-cough, when they're babies.'

Just then we came to the path that leads to Five-elm Farm, from whence there is a lane leading

down to Saltby, and I let him pull me after him in that direction.

'Come, Tom,' he said: 'there's a brick!'

'But the scholarship, Roy, if they find it out?'

'Oh! I'd rather lose a dozen scholarships than give up the circus.'

Just then we came to a stile, and Roy let go of my arm and got over first. I think if the path had led right on to Saltby, and Roy had kept hold of my arm, I should have gone with him. I wanted so much to go; I wanted so much to think that it was right; I wanted so much to think that Roy could not do wrong; and sometimes I think it was just the stile that kept me back, and sometimes I think it was something more. Anyhow, I stopped at the stile. Roy waited a moment.

'Come, Tom,' he said, impatiently, and then he turned and went on. 'Oh! I can't stop for you all day, if you're going to be disagreeable.'

I had one foot on the bar of the stile ready to follow him. I opened my mouth to call 'Roy, stop for me!' If he had turned once; if he had said, 'Tom, come: there's a brick!' I think I should have gone; I am afraid I should have gone: but he did not, so I stood at the stile and watched him out of sight. I think my only feeling just then was anger with myself for not going with Roy, and I sat for nearly half-an-hour on the stile kicking against the bar, and feeling a perfect bear of sulkiness and ill-temper. When at last I made my way back to the school, with my hands dug deep down into my pockets and a very scowling face, the first person I met was Bertie. He looked the picture of woe, and had evidently been crying.

'Hullo!' I said; 'what's the row?'

'Oh, Tom,' he said, 'it's Hodson. I'm so awfully sorry. He's gone to Saltby, and I don't know what the Doctor will say.'

'Gone to Saltby?'

'Yes. Amy's ill again, you know, and he said he'd rather lose a dozen scholarships than not go to see her when she was looking for him. He came right out after dinner, and went straight off down the road. I ran after him and caught him up, but he wouldn't listen to anything I said. I went with him as far as the turnpike-gate, and I begged him—oh, so hard!—not to go, but he would go; and now the Doctor will hear of it, and he will lose the scholarship, and deserve to lose it too, I suppose.'

I could have told Bertie much the same story about Roy, but I kept it to myself, and tried to comfort him as well as I could. We spent most of the afternoon watching the cricket, but I was too restless and uncomfortable to take much interest in anything, and it was the same with Bertie. He left me after a bit, and I was not sorry; for I did not want to tell him about Roy, and it was constantly on the tip of my tongue.

About half-an-hour before tea he came back to me quite radiant.

'Oh, Tom, I'm so glad! Hodson did not go after all.'

'How do you know?'

'Oh, he's told me; he's just come in. He turned into the fields below the turnpike and lay in the grass all the afternoon. He knew it was wrong to

go after what the Doctor said, but he's quite miserable about Amy all the same.'

'Are you sure he didn't go, and is only just humbugging you?'

'Oh, Tom, how can you? He told me.'

Just then an arm was thrown over my shoulder, and a voice sounded in my ear, 'Well, Tom, old chap, still in the sulks?' I jumped up in delight. Perhaps Roy had not been to Saltby either.

'Come along, I want to tell you all about it.'

Yes, he had gone, but he was not vexed with me for not going too; and he was in such high spirits and so full of his adventures that I could not find it in my heart to be sulky to him, and I let him pour out a description of all he had seen, and almost forgot that he had been doing wrong.

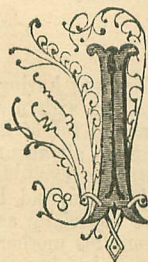
'I had such a squeak for it in Saltby,' he said, 'just by Seaview Crescent. I nearly came face to face with old Bell and some other men. I dodged down a street and ran for dear life, and I don't think he could have seen me, for he's as blind as a bat. I was so late coming back that I was obliged to come along the road, but I dodged the turnpike by coming over the fields. The only fellow who saw me was that blackguard Hodson, he was down in the grass in the field beyond the turnpike; I don't know what on earth he was doing there, but I nearly jumped on to him as I got through the hedge. If he don't sneak I'm all right, but I wouldn't trust him.'

Then Hodson's story was true. It gave me a fresh pang. I should not have felt Roy's disobedience so much if Hodson had done the same, but I could not bear to think that Hodson had done right when Roy had done wrong.

(To be continued.)

THE WRECKERS.

From the French.



It was eight o'clock in the morning; the sea was high, but nevertheless the boat of Pierre Morvan was still lying dry upon the shore.

Pierre was not gone out fishing; he was in his cottage, sitting on a bench before a fire. He amused himself from time to time by throwing upon the fire planks of an old boat to keep it alight.

Yvonne, his wife, was washing an earthenware saucepan, in which the breakfast had been served; two boys, his sons, were mending a net, which was hanging upon the wall.

'Then you will not go out to fish to-day?' said Yvonne to her husband.

'Impossible! the sea is too rough,' answered he. 'I bet that in an hour there will be a storm, such as has not come to this shore for a long time.' Then, after a moment of silence, he added in a lower voice, and with a dark smile: 'But I assure you, Yvonne, if you do not have soles or mackerel to go and sell at the market, perhaps you will have something better than fish.'

The two boys and their mother looked at Morvan with an air of surprise and hope.



The Wreckers.

'Look out there,' replied he, and opened the door of the cottage, pointing to a dot upon the horizon no larger than a sea-gull. 'Well, that is a ship; the wind is driving her here; if she gets entangled amongst our rocks she will be lost, and then Heaven will not be just if something does not fall into the hands of poor people like us. I have always had an idea, my boys, that the sea will enrich your father, and give him some treasures—a little box of gold or diamonds. This is why I built our house here in this deserted place, far from the Custom-house officers, who wish to take away from the poor the things that the sea gives them.'

'Have you remembered one thing?' asked Yvonne, with a thoughtful air. 'That our eldest son is on the sea, and, perhaps, in danger? The brig in which he embarked ought to have arrived in England to-day.'

'Bah! the captain of the brig is an old wolf of the sea; he will take care not to be caught in the storm; he will keep far out at sea, and when the storm abates he will go into port. I am quite at ease on his account.'

Soon, as Morvan had predicted, the storm burst; a furious wind shook the cottage, enormous waves hurled themselves upon the beach with a frightful noise, and great violet and black clouds covered the sky. The ship, which just before they could scarcely see, was advancing rapidly towards the shore.

'Let us go,' said Morvan. 'All is well; this is the moment we must be at our posts. Come on, my boys! bring the hooks and the grappling-irons, all that we want. Come also, wife! Everything tells me that the harvest will be good; we shall, perhaps, not be more than four to share it.'

And they went to install themselves in a group of rocks which looked upon the sea. The three men standing, and the woman sitting, all immovable, indifferent to the wind, the rain, and the waves, which nearly darted up to them. Like hungry beasts watching for their prey, they followed with their eyes the unfortunate ship battling with the storm. They saw it through a veil of foam; sometimes it bent on one side, so that its yards nearly touched the sea, sometimes it was elevated upon the top of an enormous wave, and sometimes it disappeared in an abyss for an instant.

'It comes on! It has crossed the line of rocks! Now it cannot escape us!' murmured Pierre Morvan. 'This evening, perhaps, boys,' added he in a loud voice, 'we shall be rich.'

In fact, in a few minutes they saw the ship stop short, as if it had experienced a sudden shock; a large body of water had, without doubt, penetrated her sides, for her hull was swallowed up in the sea; then her masts successively diminished in height, and were swallowed up in their turn.

'To work!' cried Pierre Morvan.

They all four descended upon the shore: keeping some distance from each other, their hooks in their hands, their bodies bent forward, up to their knees in foam, and with their eyes fixed on the waves, they waited.

A quarter of an hour passed thus.

'Now begin, Yvonne!' cried Pierre Morvan, suddenly.

Yvonne, in fact, observed a large object of a dark colour, which a big wave was rolling onwards among

broken boards and seaweed. She entered the water, and with a firm and sure hand she fastened the hook to the object, and, throwing herself backwards, drew it to the land.

'This is a man!' cried she. 'He does not move! he is dead!'

Pierre Morvan and his two sons ran up to her.

Yvonne, kneeling down, put aside the hair which covered the face of the shipwrecked man. A dreadful cry arose from her breast.

'Jean! my son!' said she, and falling backwards she fainted away.

The three men, standing up, fixed their eyes upon the corpse, as if thunderstruck.

From that day Morvan and his family renounced the horrible trade of wreckers. Pierre, for a long time, was beset with dreadful visions. He felt himself as if endowed with giant strength, breaking up a ship upon a rock, and drowning his son with his own hands.

C. S. C.

SAVED BY A FISH.

THAT the ocean abounds with wonders is daily being proved, and seldom more forcibly so than in the experience of Captain Ward, of the bark *Providence* of Hartlepool, who has just returned from Dantzic, at which port he was frozen up during the late severe winter. He states that during his outward voyage to that port, in November last, the ship sprang a severe leak during a gale in the Baltic, and his crew were all but exhausted in their efforts at the pumps to reduce it. One day she suddenly stopped making more water, and in time the vessel reached Dantzic safely. After the discharge of the cargo a search was made for the leak, and a hole was found in the centre of one of the after-planks from the yielding of a knot in the wood; in this hole there was wedged a dead fish, whose collision with the vessel when alive had stopped the leak and saved the ship and crew.

'SHOEMAKER, STICK TO YOUR LAST.'



MAXIMILIAN JOSEPH, the late king of Bavaria, was one summer day sitting in plain, civil costume, in the garden of his palace at Tegernsee. The heat was indeed great, and it was so very quiet in the garden that the king fell asleep over the book which he was reading. He laid it down beside him on the bench, and continued to slumber. When he awoke he thought he would drive away his drowsiness by taking a walk.

The road, which took him farther and farther away from the garden, brought him at last to the meadows, which extend on both sides from the shores of the beautiful lake, near which the palace stood.

Here the king remembered his book which he had left lying on the bench in his park. If any one passed by they might take the volume, which,

being rather a rare one, the king did not wish to lose. As he was unwilling to return the same way, he looked about for some one who would fetch the book for him; but far and wide he did not see a single human being, except a boy who was watching a flock of geese. The king went up to him and said,—

'Listen, my boy; you can go and fetch me a book which I have left lying on a bench in the park, and you shall have a florin for your trouble.'

The lad, who did not know the king, looked at the gentleman with much mistrust. A florin for so small a service seemed to him so large an offer as to be a hoax.

'I am not the simpleton you take me for,' said he, turning away.

'What makes you think that I take you for a simpleton?' asked the king, smiling, pleased with the open manner of the lad.

'Because you offer me a florin for such a trifling service,' replied the boy: 'money is not earned so easily. The people down there,' he added, pointing with his finger to the distant palace, 'take us all for fools, and I know you are one of them.'

'Well, and what if I am?' said the king. 'Come, here's half a florin in advance! now go and fetch me the book.'

The boy's eyes sparkled when he held the money in his hand, for he did not get much more than that for looking after the geese for the whole year; but still he hesitated.

'Well,' asked the king, 'and why don't you go?'

The boy pushed his cap on one side and scratched himself behind the ear.

'Yes,' said he, 'I will—but—I dare not. If the farmers heard that I had left the geese they would dismiss me, and I should lose my daily bread.'

'I will watch them till you come back again.'

'You?' replied the boy, measuring the stranger from top to toe: 'you don't look to me like one who can take care of geese. If they were to run away and get lost in these meadows I might have to pay more than I should earn in a year. Look at that fellow there with a black head, who belongs to the court gardener; he is an awful old bird, a deserter, a good-for-nothing, like all people who have to do with a court: he would play you fine tricks whilst I was away. No, no! that would never do.'

'But why should not I be able to keep these geese in order, as well as I succeed in keeping men in order?' said the king.

'You?' replied the lad, again eyeing the monarch with a grin: 'They must be fine fellows, indeed! Ah! now I have it! You are a schoolmaster! I tell you, boys are much easier to manage than geese.'

'Possibly: but come, be quick. Will you fetch me the book? I will answer for any mischief that may happen.'

This decided the boy. He enjoined the king to keep a watchful eye over the goose which he called the court gardener—a splendid gander, who might run off directly, leading the whole herd after him. Then the boy gave him the whip and ran off, but soon stood still, and then came back again.

'What does this mean?' cried the king to him.

'Crack it once!' ordered the boy.

The king tried it, but it would not crack at all.

'That's just what I thought!' exclaimed the boy. 'The schoolmaster fancies he can take care of geese, and cannot even crack a whip!'

Then he took the whip out of the king's hand and showed him how to crack it. His majesty could scarcely repress his laughter; he tried all he could to learn how to crack it, and when he had succeeded the boy enjoined him to use it at the right moment, and then he ran away. Now the king could laugh as much as he liked.

But, in fact, it seemed as if the geese observed at once that their young, but severe master, no longer held the reins of government. The gander which the boy had pointed out as the court gardener raised his long neck, looked everywhere round him, uttered several, quack! quacks! and then all the geese raised their wings, screamed aloud, and before the king could look round rushed off to all points of the compass in the meadows around the lake.

The king cried out—it was of no use; he wanted to crack the whip, but the whip gave out no sound, he ran to the right, he ran to the left—all of no use whatever. Out of breath with laughing, he sat down on the trunk of a tree where the boy had been sitting and let the geese go.

'The boy was really right,' he said to himself, 'that it is easier to govern a couple of millions of men than to manage a herd of geese. Only it was that scoundrel the court gardener who was the cause of all this mischief.'

The boy meanwhile had found the book and came merrily back. But when he saw what had happened he let the book fall out of his hand.

'There we have it!' he exclaimed, sobbing with anger and grief. 'Didn't I say you understood nothing about it? Just look now! I can't collect them together by myself. Now you will have to help me!'

After the boy had instructed the king how he must lift up his arms, wave them about and shout aloud, he ran off to fetch the most distant of the strayed flock.

The king did all that was in his power, and after great exertions the whole flock was at last assembled again: then the boy began to scold the king for doing his duty so badly, concluding with the words:—

'Never in my life will I trust the whip out of my hands again. I wouldn't even entrust it to the king himself, if he tried to persuade me to leave my flock.'

'You are right, my brave lad,' said the king, bursting into a loud laugh: 'he understands no more about it than I do, for I am the king myself.'

'You? You may make a simpleton believe that, but not me!' he exclaimed. 'Take your book and make haste and go home. To pretend, indeed, that you are the king after showing yourself so clumsy!'

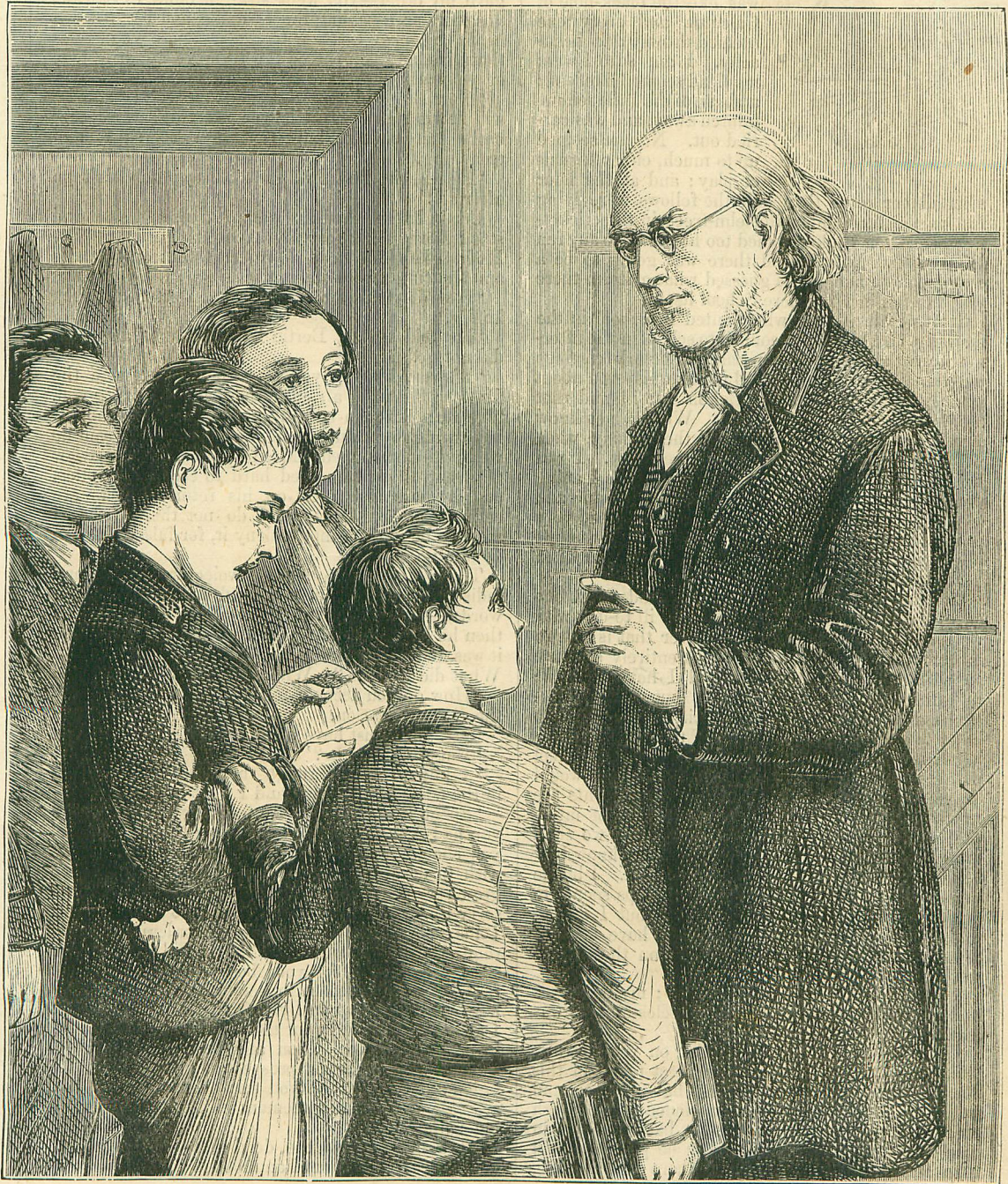
'Don't be out of temper,' said the good-natured king, as he offered him another florin: 'I will pledge you my word never again to take charge of geese.'

The boy thanked him, thought for a little while, and then said, 'Whoever you are, you are a good gentleman, but don't deceive yourself that you are a goose-herd. Remember the proverb, "Shoemaker, stick to your last."' J. F. C.



The Boy and the King.

Chatterbox.

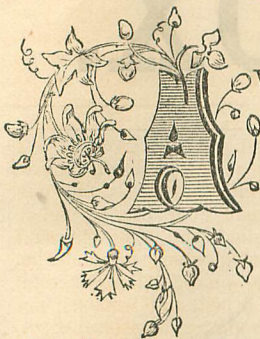


"Please sir, he didn't go to Saltby

TOM'S OPINION.

(Continued from page 60.)

CHAPTER X.



VERY hot, sultry day followed. The schoolroom was like the black-hole of Calcutta, and every one seemed drowsy and head-achy. I am sure I was; my head seemed like lead; and one of the little fellows fainted away, and was carried out. No one seemed up to much, either lessons or play; and at the hour

after dinner more than half the fellows were lying flat on the turf under the elm-trees in the cricket-field, and even Blake seemed too hot to have any fun left in him. We all said there was going to be a storm, but we none of us guessed what a storm there was brewing in Highmore School itself.

It was little Belton who fainted in school in the morning, and he did not come into school in the afternoon, and at tea-time the Saltby doctor's carriage was standing at the door, and it was whispered about among the boys that little Belton was ill, and that the doctor said it was the fever. We did not know anything for certain, however, till the evening, when we were preparing lessons for the next day. I was half asleep over my Latin exercise, and was leaning my heavy head on the desk, when the Doctor and some of the other masters came in. He looked very worried and anxious, and there was an immediate silence in the hubbub that had been going on when he tapped on his desk.

'I am sorry to have to tell you,' he said, 'that one of your schoolfellows has been taken ill to-day with what there is little doubt is the fever that is now so much in Saltby. He will be kept entirely separate from the rest of the school, and I hope that the infection may spread no further; but I have telegraphed to some parents and written to others to know what they would wish as to the return of the boys; and I think, most probably, that the school will break up to-morrow, a week sooner than would otherwise have occurred. Those whose parents are afraid of receiving them at home for fear of infection will remain here for the present, but we shall know more of this to-morrow. I do not know how the infection was brought into the school. I blame myself greatly for not having taken steps sooner to prevent any intercourse with Saltby; but I do not know whether any precautions would have been of much use, since I find that my order on the subject was disobeyed before a day was over.'

I felt the blood rush into my face: my heart was sick for Roy, at the disgrace and disclosure that was coming.

'I do not say,' the Doctor went on very sternly, 'that the infection has been the direct result of this disobedience. It may or may not have been so, and it is not a light thought on a conscience that through careless disobedience a young life has been put in danger; but the disobedience must be punished with the severity which it deserves.' There was a pause,

and then, 'Richard Hodson, come here!' The Doctor's voice sank lower, but I could hear every word. 'I hear that your relations live in Saltby. I was not aware of this when you came to Highmore. I find that yesterday, having been present when I spoke to you all about my wishes—in fact, when I gave my order—you went straight down to Saltby; you were seen passing the turnpike, and again down in Saltby, near Seaview Crescent, where your relations live, and you passed the turnpike again at five, on your way back.'

'Now Roy will speak,' I said to myself; 'now he will set it right.' But it was not Roy's voice that broke the silence, but Bertie's voice, shrill and trembling.

'Please, sir, he didn't go to Saltby; he didn't go after all!'

Bertie had pushed his way to Hodson's side, and stood there with a very white face and quivering lips. Hodson kept his head down, and went on opening and shutting a book in a nervous way.

'How do you know, my boy?' the Doctor said, very kindly.

'He told me so,' Bertie burst out. 'I'm sure he did not go.'

'It's very kind of you to take his part,' said the Doctor; 'but I'm afraid he has been deceiving you. The turnpike-man saw him pass and heard another boy trying to persuade him not to go, and he said he was quite determined. Mr. Bell saw him in Seaview Crescent, though he tried hard to escape his notice, and he was also seen on his return. Facts are entirely against him, and I do not think if he is sensible he will attempt to deny it, for falsehoods can do him no good.'

Then Hodson spoke; his voice was thick and indistinct, and he blundered and stammered out his words,—'It's a mistake; I was not in Saltby.' And then he looked round, as if for help; and I thought it was at Roy that he looked, but still Roy was silent. What did it mean? What was Roy waiting for?

'How do you account for being seen there, then?' the Doctor went on.

'Mr. Bell must have made a mistake.'

'But the turnpike?'

'I know I went through the turnpike, but I was in the fields just beyond, and I went no further.'

'Spent three hours in the fields by yourself, when you had said you must go to Saltby? Ah, Hodson! you should have made up a more likely story if you wish to deceive any one.' Then the Doctor's voice grew very stern and hard. 'Richard Hodson, I am sorry that you have added falsehood to disobedience; I may say, open defiance of my orders. I must request that you will leave the school at once. I shall give orders for your box to be sent to your friends, and I shall inform them of the reason which has obliged me to expel you from Highmore School. I am the more sorry for this, as I have seen cause to praise your application and perseverance, and I thought you had good prospect of getting the exhibition; but I must tell you that obedience and truth are essential for advancement either in the outer or inner life.'

Then there was silence, dead silence in the school; and then Hodson turned and looked round the room,

at the Doctor, at Roy, at the other masters, at the boys, and then let his head sink on his breast, and went shuffling out in his old slipshod way, that I had so often laughed at. Bertie shook him by the hand as he went out; and one other boy did the same—I think it was Blake. I wish—oh how I wish I had done it too! but my head was heavy and confused, and everything seemed wrong and crooked. Where was Roy, my hero, who was always foremost in seeing right done, and so indignant at any injustice; who was always talking of his honour, and of a gentleman's word? A word from him would have set Hodson right, but he did not speak it. Everything was topsy-turvy; Roy was acting the part of a sneak and a coward; and Hodson, even though he shuffled out of the room as ungainly and awkward as ever, was changed into a hero, suffering unjustly in the place of another. How could they change places so wonderfully? As I leant my head on my exercise-book I felt I could have cried if the other fellows had not been there, but it was for Roy more than for Hodson, for I seemed to have lost the Roy I had known, and the real Roy was something very different.

I made just one struggle to set up my hero again on his pedestal, but without success. When we went up to bed Roy came up to me, and put his arm over my shoulder as he used to do in the old times. There was a queer look about him, as if he were afraid to meet my eye—(just fancy being afraid of me!)—and his voice was quite coaxing as he spoke. 'Tom, old chap, you're not well; are you?'

'Oh, I'm well enough,' I answered: 'but, Roy,' I said in a whisper, 'why don't you speak and set Hodson right again with the Doctor?'

His arm dropped away from me angrily.

'Oh! what does it signify about a cad like Hodson! The school is well rid of him, say I, and the Doctor ought to thank his stars that he is out of the house before he ruined the school. I thought Highmore was a school for gentlemen and not for cads.'

'Well,' I said, 'if gentlemen are such cowards and sneaks, I don't want to be a gentleman; I'd rather be a cad.'

'Do you want your head punched for you, Tom Carter? for if you don't you'd better shut up.'

I did not want my head punched, for it ached quite enough without that, and I was glad to lay it down on the pillow, and shut my eyes, and try to forget all that had passed.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT a long, strange night that was, full of dreams and curious fancies! I have a sort of recollection of hearing myself talking, and knowing I was talking nonsense, without being able to stop myself. And then I remember Roy standing by my bedside, looking very strange and frightened, and saying, 'Tom, old boy! Tom!' And then Mr. Hutton in his dressing-gown was standing there, with his hand on my wrist, telling me it was not time to get up yet, and I must lie still. And all at once it was Hodson and not Mr. Hutton, and he was opening and shutting a book just as he did while the Doctor spoke to him, and my head throbbed every time the book moved.

And after that it was always Hodson or Roy that was by my side, all through that long night that seemed to have no end. But the end came at last. Roy and Hodson were no longer there taking up all my thoughts and attention. It seemed to me as though we were in school, and it was calling-over time. The Doctor himself was calling the names, and the first name he called was 'Hodson,' and I heard Hodson's voice, quite plainly, answer, 'Here, sir;' but I could not see him anywhere, and some one standing near said he had gone into a higher class. Then 'Roy' was called, and some one said 'Absent,' and I was wondering where he could be, and waiting to hear 'Carter, senior,' called, when all at once I found I was still in bed, and I opened my eyes and looked round the room. It was still night, but the gas was not burning, only a night-light on the table: it was the small dormitory sure enough still, but mine was the only bed in it. A table stood by the side with medicine-bottles and glasses on it, and there was some one sitting by my side whose face I could not see, only a hand on the bed-clothes, white and slender, and cool-looking. I tried to touch it as it lay there, but felt as if my own hands were too heavy to lift from the bed at my side. It looked so like mother's hand; but how could mother be at Highmore in the middle of the night? I felt so queer and babyish that the very thought of mother made my eyes quite damp, and brought a lump to my throat. I must have stirred a little, for the some one who was sitting by my side heard me move, and the next minute I was looking up into mother's face, and she was looking so glad and bright, though her eyes were damp, too; and she only said, 'I am here, Tom.' 'It's mother! thank God!' I did not consider how she came there in the night, or what had happened, or where the other boys had gone, or why I felt so weak and strange. I only knew that mother was there and that it was all right; and I took hold of both her hands quite tight and went to sleep again.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE HOUSE BY THE BRIDGE OF JENA.

ONE of the finest bridges in Paris is called the Bridge of Jena, after the battle of that name, which was fought in 1806, by Napoleon, against the Prussians, when the latter were completely routed and put to flight; so that their whole country fell into the hands of the invaders.

When afterwards the tables were turned, and the Prussians, being victorious, invaded France, their general, Marshal Blucher, wished to blow up this bridge, and would have done so had it not been for the interference of the Duke of Wellington.

In the year 1811 a little house stood opposite to this bridge. It had stood there for very many years, and time and wind and weather had left traces of their power on it. The tiles on the roof had large spaces between them, through which the sun shone in, or rain, hail, and snow could pay their visits. The weak old beams of the house looked weary and worn, as if they longed to lie down and rest under the earth. The plaster on the walls had entirely fallen



The Cobbler dancing with delight.

off in many places. The windows hung loosely in their frames, and rattled with the least wind, or when a carriage drove by. The doors, too, were rotten and shaky. One could see that many a generation had gone in and out of this house. In short, the little one-storied dwelling looked very pitiable and melancholy. Any one who would accept it as a present must be very hard up; for it would cost much money to repair it so that it should not be put

to shame by its stately neighbours on the right and left.

In the house lived, at the time of which we write, a poor shoemaker, named Martin, with his wife and three children. His old mother, too, as she had no other relation in the world, lived with him, and ate at his table. The shoemaker had inherited the house from his father. For many years it had passed always from father to son in his family.



The Cobbler gazing out of the window.

The outside faithfully represented what the inside was. The shoemaker was a poor man. He had not learned his trade very well, so that all he could do was to lay a thick plaster on the wounds of invalid boots and shoes. He was thus nothing more than a cobbler. Not much money is earned by such work as this; moreover, Master Martin was not an industrious workman. He only sat down on his cobbler's stool when the food in his cupboard

was nearly all gone. Then he would go on cobbling and sewing to earn enough money to feed and clothe himself and his family. But when he had got a few extra pence he cast away his tools from him, as if they would burn his fingers. What he liked best was to saunter about in the streets of Paris, and pick up all the news of the day. This is a pleasant and easy occupation, but not a profitable one.

Thus it happened that his house became more ruinous and shabby every month; he and his wife and children went about in tattered clothes, and often there was scarcely any food on the table. The old mother warned and implored her son, as well as she could, but he did not trouble himself about her entreaties and reproaches.

His wife grieved every day over her indolent and thoughtless husband. She was a brave, good woman, and an excellent housewife. But as her husband would not work, she could do nothing to avert their increasing poverty. She had to be silent, for if she complained she received hard blows.

In those days there was always something new and beautiful to see in the city of Paris. The Emperor Napoleon was then at the height of his fame and power.

Master Martin had spent most of his time in seeing all that was to be seen. Sitting on his cobbler's stool pleased him less than ever. From early morning till late at night he strolled through Paris, and only worked when it was positively necessary to get food for himself. What became of his old mother, his wife, and his children, he did not trouble himself in the least. They might see to that themselves.

Through the indolence and love of pleasure of the husband and father, the greatest misery came into the wretched house in the summer of 1811, and hunger and want, sorrow and trouble, were at home there. The poor women and children stalked about starving and sad. Master Martin, too, had at last learned, by his own hunger, that it could not go on thus any longer. He sat down on his stool, and hammered, and cobbled, and stitched so quickly, that it seemed as if he wished to earn a couple of hundred dollars at least in a few hours. However, every now and then he let his head hang down, and his hands ceased working. He pondered how he could make a quick end of his poverty, and become a rich man without much trouble. This would please him more than anything.

Whilst he was thus sitting one day two grandly dressed officers came up to his house. They opened the door, and came at once into his wretched little workroom. Martin cast away his work, came down from his stool, politely took off his cap, and inquired, 'Why they had honoured him with a visit, and how he could serve them?'

The two strangers looked round for some chairs on which to sit; but with these the room was ill-provided. At the window, and near the stove, were two chairs indeed; but they were so rickety that no one would venture to trust himself to them. One had no back, and the other had lost a leg. The cobbler's stool had to be fetched to supply the place of the latter. At last the two officers were seated, and our cobbler stood before them, waiting to hear what they had to say to him.

'Your name is Martin?' inquired the elder of the two; 'and you are the owner of this house?'

'Yes, certainly; the master-shoemaker Martin, and this house is my property,' he replied, as a feeling of his dignity as a proprietor swelled his heart.

'Well, Master Martin,' continued the stranger, 'we come to you in the name of his Majesty the Emperor. You know that a son was born to his

Majesty last March. He has determined to build a palace for the King of Rome in this space here (with this he pointed with his left hand out of the window). For this it is needful that your house should be pulled down. His Majesty wishes to purchase your house of you, and has sent us to inquire the price you demand for it. We have full powers to pay you down the required sum, and to conclude the purchase. Will you be kind enough to tell us what you want for this house?'

A smile passed over the face of the surprised cobbler. Now his want was all at an end. Now was the wish of his heart fulfilled,—that he might become rich without trouble, and in one moment. But he was a sharp and cunning fellow, so he did not let them perceive how pleased he was; but replied quite coolly, 'Yes, gentlemen, this is all very fine what you say. I can well believe that my house pleases his Majesty the Emperor, and that he desires to possess it. But it pleases me too. I inherited it from my father, and for many years it has been the property of our family. I cannot decide at once to sell the inheritance of my family, and I must first take your proposal into serious consideration.'

'But recollect, Master Martin,' said the other stranger, 'your house is small, old, and ruinous. It is really scarcely worth 300 dollars. Remember, too, that his Majesty the Emperor wishes to have it, and that you, as a good Frenchman, ought to agree to your Emperor's wishes. Remember, finally, that we are willing to pay you more than three times the value of the house. We offer you 1000 dollars,—a sum which you never could have dreamed ever to have called your own. Be reasonable, then, and we will conclude the purchase, and pay you down the money on the spot.'

Master Martin shook his head. He would gladly have had the money; but he thought to himself that he would be a fool to be satisfied with the price named, when he might demand and receive a much higher sum. So he kept to his first answer.

Much as the two gentlemen pressed him, he persisted that he must consult about the affair with his wife and his best friends. The two gentlemen might come to him next Monday, when he would acquaint them with his decision. They saw now that all their fine words would be of no avail with him, so they got up and left him, with the promise that they would come again on Monday to receive his final answer.

The strangers had scarcely left the house before Master Martin shoved his stool, his tools, and heap of old shoes and boots of his customers, away into the corner, and, overflowing with joy, began to dance round the room. 'Bravo! Now all my want and labour are at an end,' he exclaimed. 'I will show the Emperor what my house is worth, and he shall pay me handsomely,' he said, singing and dancing round and round, till his wife and mother came in to see what was the cause of all this noise.

When Monday came, and the two strangers appeared again, the shoemaker declared that he must have 3000 dollars for his house. The officers were amazed and annoyed at this shameless demand, which was ten times too much. But, as on their former visit, their words were of no avail. They at

last said that they must write to the minister, and ask his further commands. With these words they left the house.

The two strangers were the architects who were commissioned to build the palace for the new-born prince. They went at once to the minister, begged him to represent the matter to the Emperor, and to consent to the price demanded, that they might conclude the purchase, pull down the house, and begin to erect the palace. But the communications having to pass from the architects to the minister, and from him to the Emperor, took up some time, and several weeks elapsed before the imperial reply was received. Napoleon, who was determined to have the house, and did not care about 2000 dollars more or less, was quite content with the price asked. He thought it a very modest demand. And as it happened that when the letter was read to him he was in a very good humour, he ordered that 5000, and not 3000 dollars, should be paid to the poor shoemaker, as a reward for his moderation, as he was probably in great want of the money, and that the purchase should be concluded at once.

One day one of the cobbler's best friends came to him. He was a public writer, of whom there are many in the city of Paris. They have their wooden stalls, where they sit from morning to evening and write letters for those who cannot write themselves, for which they are paid according to a fixed price. The people who follow this calling in Paris are mostly old soldiers, almost always drunkards and bad characters. Such an one was our shoemaker's friend. But, nevertheless, he considered himself to be a very wise man. He reproached the cobbler for having asked much too low a price. 'You simpleton!' he said, 'the Emperor wishes, and is determined to have your house, even if you ask 25,000 dollars for it. It is too near the new palace to be allowed to stand. Don't be a fool, then, and through your stupidity let such a piece of good luck escape you. Ask boldly 25,000 dollars, and see if you won't get it!'

This friend's advice pleased Master Martin well, and he determined to follow it. When the two architects came back in a few days, and brought him the news that his Majesty had ordered 5000 dollars to be paid him, he smiled contemptuously at the smallness of the sum. At last he said, 'Gentlemen, I have thought the matter over, and come to a different decision. I am not so stupid as you seem to think me. If I do not receive 25,000 dollars for my house I cannot conclude the sale.'

The architects were horrified at this unheard-of demand. They reproached the man for breaking his word as he had done. But Martin turned a deaf ear to all their speeches. He maintained his demand, and declared that he would not abate one penny of it.

The men left the house vexed and out of patience. What could they do now? They must again report to the minister and the Emperor, and ask for further orders. Napoleon was much annoyed when he received their letter. He replied, 'Let the money be paid to the rogue at once. He is capable, if we wait any longer, of asking 50,000 dollars for his wretched tumble-down tenement.'

The Emperor understood his subjects well. When

the two men came again, and announced somewhat bluffly to the cobbler that the Emperor had consented to pay the 25,000 dollars, the proprietor smiled cunningly, and said that the bargain should be concluded; 'but you understand, gentlemen,' he added, 'that as I shall now have to withdraw to another dwelling, I cannot be expected to pay the costs of removal out of my own pocket. For this I must request 5000 dollars more.'

The officials left the house in a rage, and sent in a third report to the Emperor. Napoleon read it with an indignant countenance. At last he said, with much seriousness, 'If the matter stands thus, the purchase of the house must be *left altogether*. It will only encourage my subjects in cheating, and in making shameful and exorbitant demands. The house may remain standing. It will teach my son the lesson that even to the sovereign the property of his subjects is sacred.'

Thus the affair ended. Master Martin received no further offer. The strange gentlemen did not return to his house.

Next year Napoleon left the capital to carry on his campaign against Russia. Then followed the war against the allied armies, the double capture of Paris, the abdication and banishment of the Emperor. So the plan for erecting the palace was given up.

Master Martin often stood gazing out of the window, hoping for the return of the two architects. He would at first willingly have accepted 25,000, very soon after 5000, and at last would have been quite contented with 1000 dollars. But, much as he looked out for them, the two strangers never appeared again. This sad experience did not, alas! bring him to industrious labour, to prayer, and to the fear of God. He went on just as he had done before, so that he and his family died at last in misery. The house by the Jena bridge at length fell down of itself, and its ruins can no longer be seen. If it were standing, one might well write over its doors, and on its walls, 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. But godliness with contentment is great gain' (2 Tim. vi. 6, 9).

JAMES F. COBB.

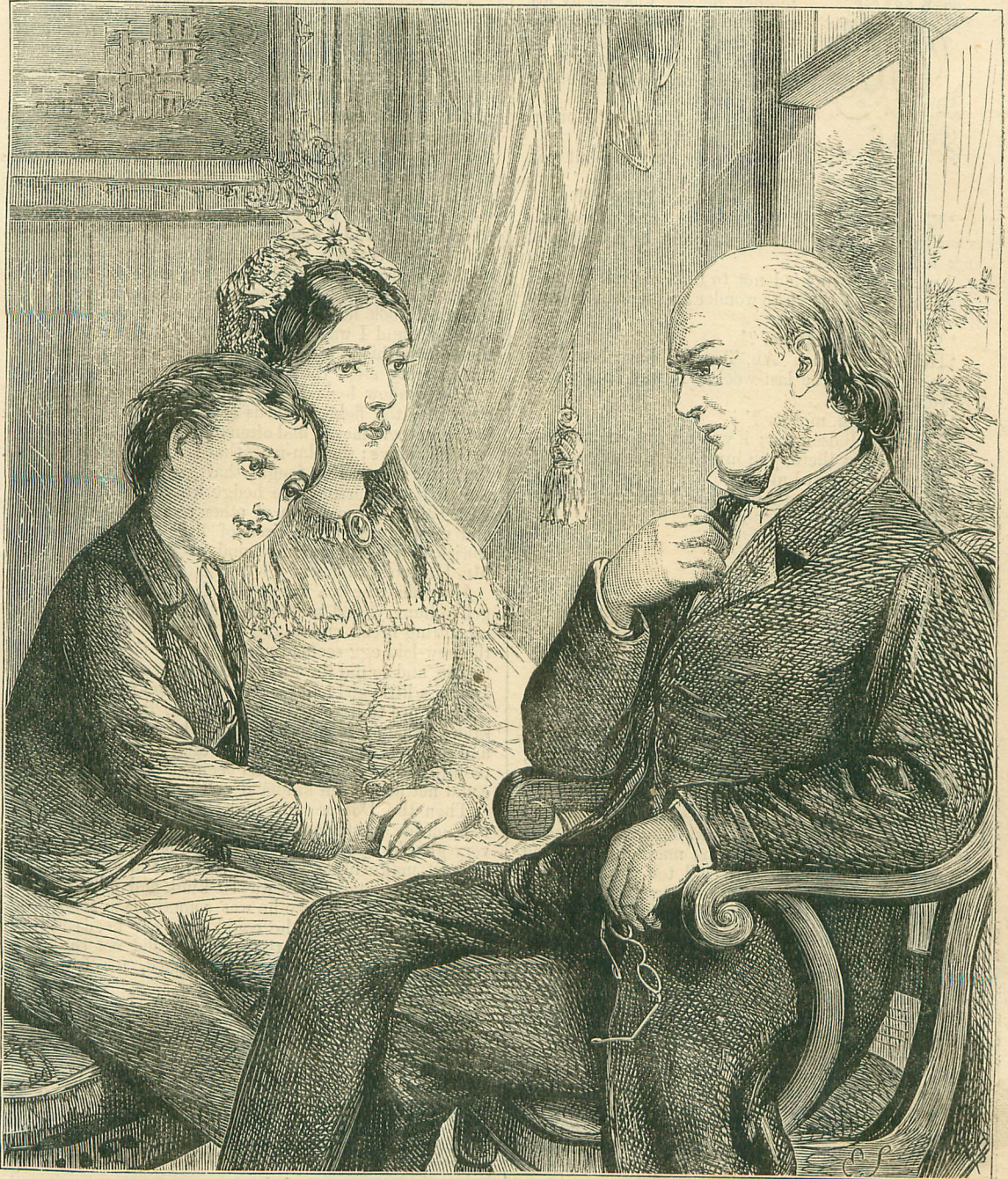
A HORSE PROTECTING A DOG.

SOME months ago a poor dog, having been pelted with sticks and stones by cruel boys until his flesh was bruised and his leg fractured, limped into a stable. In one of the stalls was an intelligent young horse, which seemed touched by the distress of the dog. He bent his head and inspected the broken leg, and with his fore feet pushed some straw into a corner of the stall, and made a bed for the dog. One day, when the horse was eating the bran mash, which formed part of his food, he gently caught the dog by the neck, and with his teeth lifted him into the trough. For weeks the two friends fed together, and the invalid grew strong. At night the horse arranged a soft bed for the dog, and encircled him with one of his fore feet, showing the utmost carefulness. Such kindness might well be copied by the human race.



Horse protecting a Dog.

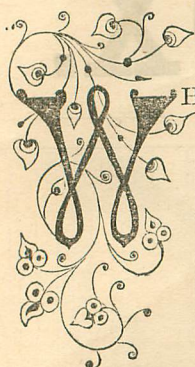
Chatterbox.



Tom listening to the Doctor's story.

TOM'S OPINION.

(Concluded from p. 67.)



WHEN I woke again it was day, but it was no dream about mother, for she was still by my side, and the Saltby doctor was there too.

'Well, young gentleman,' said the doctor, 'so you're better to-day, are you?'

'Better!' I said. 'Mother, have I been ill?'

'Yes, dear, very ill; but you are better now.'

'Have I been ill long?'

'Eight days,' said the doctor; 'and now that's enough: you must just lie still and be a baby, and not talk.'

I was quite contented not to talk at first, but as I grew stronger I began to wonder and remember, and think and ask questions.

'Where's Roy, mother?'

'He's gone home. Ah, Tom! I have heard his name so often in the last week. It was hardly ever off your lips.'

'And Hodson, mother?'

'Yes, and Hodson too; it was always one name or the other. But there, you must not talk any more.'

By-and-by I heard more.

'Have any of the other boys had the fever?'

'Yes, two or three.'

'Has Roy?'

'No, I think not.'

'Or Hodson?'

'Yes, dear.'

'Badly?'

'Yes, very badly.'

'Is he better?'

Mother's face was turned away.

'He is well, Tom; quite well.'

Then another time:—

'Does the Doctor know about Roy, mother?'

'Yes. About his going to Saltby and letting Hodson bear the blame? Yes, it was all found out. You were always talking of it, and it was partly from what you said and partly from Bertie's letter that I felt sure some injustice had been done, and I spoke to Doctor May about it, and he made inquiries and found out all about it. He will tell you the whole story some day himself when you are stronger.'

'But is it all set right about Hodson?'

'Yes, quite right.'

It was a very great relief to hear this, and I was quite satisfied to wait for the rest till I was better. As I lay there a good many things came back to my memory about Roy and Hodson, and I saw them in a different light to what I had done when they happened. I saw Hodson's patient hard work and industry very plainly. I saw the 'crib' and the twisted letters, and as I saw it in my mind the letters might stand just as well for Harry Roy as for Richard Hodson; and when Hodson looked me in the face and said, 'It's not my book,' it was the truth he told and not a lie. And then, too, I saw the hoard of

good things hidden away in Hodson's desk, which had disgusted me so with his greediness; and side by side with that hoard I saw little Amy, with her invalid fancies and feverish lips; and I saw how unjust I had been. 'I will tell him,' I said to myself, 'I will tell him how sorry I am.'

I got better very fast—wonderfully fast the doctor said, and mother was beginning to talk of moving me away from Highmore to some sea-side place. Bertie had not taken the fever and was at home with father and Edie. I remember so well the first day I moved out of the small dormitory; I went to have tea in Mr. Hutton's room, which was the room next the small dormitory. It was a very hot afternoon, and the window was wide open to catch the least breath of air, and a sofa was pulled close up to it for me, and the tea for mother and me was laid on a small table close by. I had got on some of my clothes for the first time, and I had grown so while I was in bed that I could scarcely believe that they were my own clothes, there was so much wrist and ankle showing. It seemed quite a long way into the next room, though I took hold of mother's arm, for my knees shook so, and I was quite glad to sink down on to the sofa cushions and rest, though it was not more than twenty steps that I had taken.

The window looked over the cricket-ground and away into the fields towards Marston, and I pointed out to mother places I had often told her about at home in the holidays; the elm-trees that Larry had climbed, the place where Roy fought that great bully Jones, the path to Marston, the hedge where the thrush's nest had been, and lots of other remarkable spots; and mother was never tired of listening to all the stories that came into my mind, as I looked out of Mr. Hutton's window.

How nice the tea was, too! I was beginning to get so hungry, and mother seemed as pleased to go on cutting bread and butter as I was to eat it, and the new-laid egg seemed nicer than any egg was ever before, and so did the great red strawberries that the Doctor's little girl had picked on purpose for me.

'You are to have a visitor after tea, Tom,' mother said. 'Doctor May has asked if he may come up and see you. He came several times when you were too ill to know him. He has been so kind, Tom; he could not have been kinder if you had been his son.'

Then the Doctor came and shook hands, and he took off his spectacles and wiped them, and said how very glad he was to see me so much better, but that I must make haste and get strong, and stout, and red-cheeked again. He was so kind, and jolly, and cheerful, not a bit like he was sometimes in school, when he looked as if he could snap our heads off. He talked away some time, but he did not say a word of Roy or Hodson till I asked, for I was longing to hear all about it.

'Mother said you would tell me about Hodson, sir.'

He looked across quickly to mother, and she said, 'Tom, dear, I think we had better wait till another day for that.'

But I had been so petted, and I had had it all my own way for so long, that I persisted.

'I should like to hear about it now; I am not all tired; and if the Doctor would tell me I should like to hear it.'

And then mother said no more, but she drew her chair close to the sofa and put her dear hand in mine, as if she knew it would comfort me.

'It is a sad story, my boy, that I have to tell you,' the Doctor began, and then all at once I knew that I should never be able to tell Hodson I was sorry; that I should never shake him by the hand and tell him how unjust I had been; and that when mother said 'Hodson was well, quite well,' she meant that he would never be ill any more, for he was dead. Yes, he had taken the fever and died the week after. His name had been called in the solemn calling over of death and he had answered, and had been put into a higher class by the great Master.

'He had a weak, feeble constitution, and he had worked far beyond his strength,' the Doctor said. 'Poor boy! poor little lad! I did not know he was ill, but I went down to explain how the mistake had arisen and how Roy had deceived us, and I found that he was very near his end. There, Tom, I will tell you more about it another time.'

'Go on, please,' I whispered, though my tears were falling fast on mother's hand.

'He was conscious and knew me, and he asked for you, for he had heard you were ill, and he said, "I hope he will get well: I always liked Tom Carter, though he did not like me." He hardly seemed to care to hear of the discovery of Roy's deceit and of his own innocence. He set little store by any one's opinion. When I said something of his coming back to school and the exhibition he shook his head. "I tried to do my best," he said, "but I am glad it is over." He knew he was dying, but he did not say much. He was never one to say much, his poor mother says. I said some prayers by his side, and I left him sleeping, and he never woke again in this world, Tom; and may God comfort his poor mother, for she is heart-broken—"the only son of his mother, and she was a widow!" He was a good boy, truthful, honourable, patient, conscientious. I wish from my heart that all my boys were like him in the sight of God.'

Ah! that was the thing—"In the sight of God." As I lay with my head on mother's lap after the doctor went away I thought of those words,—'In the sight of God.' He sees so differently from what we do; where we see the ugliness and the awkwardness outside, He sees 'the beauty of holiness' that makes 'all glorious within.' And then mother, guessing my thoughts, spoke of the dimness of human sight, of seeing 'now through a glass darkly,' and of the great Christian charity that 'thinketh no evil,' that 'hopeth all things, believeth all things,' that seeks the gold among all the dross, that finds out the image and superscription of the Maker though the coinage be ever so debased, that sees our Lord Himself in the very lowest and meanest, remembering how He said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' that calls 'nothing common or unclean which God Himself has cleansed.' And then she said how we must distrust our own opinions, and be very slow to judge harshly. She said how Lot in wicked Sodom entertained angels unawares, and how the disciples going to Emmaus felt their hearts burn within them as they talked to a Stranger on the way.

'It is only love that makes us clearer sighted. Little Amy's loving eyes saw clearer than you did; and this must be our help till we see face to face, till we know even as also we are known.'

'Mother,' I said, by-and-by, 'do you know, I don't think I shall ever have any opinion about anything again, except one thing?'

'And what's that, Tom?'

'Why, that no one ever had such a mother as you are all the world over; and nothing will alter that opinion as long as I live.'

A GALLANT STEED.

IN the year 1796 or 1797 the late Mr. John Wylie, parish of Dornock, paid a visit to a friend on the English side of the Solway Firth, and while returning home attempted to cross by a well-known ford, about a mile or so to the eastward of Bowness. He travelled on horseback, was well mounted, and knew the time precisely of low water; but an intense frost lay on flood and field, and in the course of a very few hours the process of crystallisation had gone forward so rapidly, that the ice, which deeply incrustated the sand-banks, and crackled under his horse's hoofs, stretched even far into the middle of the firth. With much difficulty he groped his way through the river Eden, and, on reaching the Esk, the air became so cold and the atmosphere so hazy, that his senses were not a little bewildered. His gallant steed, unlike his wont, evinced great reluctance to proceed, and though admonished by both whip and spur, went forward at a very lagging pace. This, to the rider, seemed an ominous circumstance, and while pausing to reflect on his situation, the sagacious animal turned gently round of its own accord, and appeared much more willing to retreat than advance. This incident, trifling as it was, determined Mr. Wylie to resign himself entirely to the guidance of his horse; but he had not proceeded far in the backward route when he heard the distant sound of waters, and ascertained by more than one indication that the flood-tide, unstayed and unrebuked by the frost, was advancing with its usual fearful rapidity.

His situation was now perilous in the extreme. Placed, in a dark night, between two rivers, neither of them deep yet sufficiently dangerous, with an ocean-tide in the rear that has overwhelmed hundreds in the course of centuries, he literally knew not where to flee or look for aid: to reach the English coast by out-galloping the tide was an utter impossibility, even if the Eden had not intervened; and after commending his soul to Divine Providence, the bewildered traveller took his station on the largest and thickest sheet of ice he could find, in the hope, rather than the expectation, that it would haply float him to dry land. The poor animal proved by its trembling that it shared deeply in the fears of its master, and endangered the safety of both by its restlessness, as the wind whistled louder and louder, and the waters approached nearer and nearer, until spray and head-wave foamed, and rushed, and lashed around its sides. Still Mr. Wylie, who had previously dismounted, stood unmoved at the extremity of the reins, and after a very brief space he not only



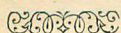
heard the ice 'break up,' but felt that he was fairly under way.

The strong swell now impelled the voyagers rapidly forward, but before they arrived at Tardoff Point, a distance of at least three miles, the slippery raft unfortunately separated, leaving the yeoman standing upon one fragment and his companion upon another. When the tide began to ebb the icebergs floated in a contrary direction: and while again sailing rapidly with the stream, the horse passed his master at a

little distance, and neighed so loud that it was perfectly obvious he saw and recognised him. His share of the iceberg was either the largest, or, from some other cause, it floated fastest; but both at length were safely landed on the Cumberland coast, about halfway between Bowness and Cardornack, and at the distance of a quarter of a mile from each other. Their meeting was necessarily a very happy one; and though they had drifted altogether above eight miles, neither had sustained the slightest injury.



On finding his way to the nearest inn, Mr. Wylie interested the owner's feelings by relating the wonderful escape he had made, and before tasting a morsel himself, saw his steed rubbed down and suppered in the best style. So highly did he esteem the gallant steed that he took the utmost care of it in its old days, and at its death he had it buried at the bottom of a sunny knoll, honouring the deceased with as grateful a tear as ever dropped from human eye.



A STORY OF A WHEELBARROW.

From the Flemish of Hendrik Conscience. By J. F. Cobb, Esq.

DURING the last days of January, 1841, the cold was terribly severe. The streets of Antwerp had put on their winter dress, and glistened in their pure whiteness. The hail rattled against the windows of the closely shut-up houses; and the cutting, icy wind, drove most of the citizens who showed themselves on their door-steps back again to their bright and glowing fireplaces.

But regardless of the bitter cold, and although it was only nine o'clock in the morning, yet many people were in the streets, because it was market-day. The boys tried to warm themselves by running, the good citizens breathed into their stiffened hands, and the working men beat their arms backwards and forwards across their chests.

At this moment a lady was walking through the Winkel Street, whose inhabitants she seemed to know very well, for she went in and out of many of the poor people's houses; when she came out she often had a look of pleasure on her countenance. She was dressed in a thickly wadded silk mantle, a velvet bonnet, a boa round her neck, and her hands in a muff. This seemingly rich young lady was standing at the door of a house which she was just about to enter, when she saw another lady whom she knew approaching in the distance; so she remained standing at the door of the poor dwelling till her friend came nearer, then with a friendly smile she went up to her, and said,—

'Good morning, Adèle! how are you?'

'Pretty well. How are you?'

'Very well; and I can't tell you how happy I am.'

'Why so? It seems to me that the weather is anything but pleasant!'

'Oh, for me it is well enough, Adèle. I have only been an hour out of bed, and yet I have already visited the houses of twenty poor people. But I have seen poverty, dear Adèle—poverty enough to make one's heart break. Hunger, cold, sickness, nakedness,—it is terrible. Oh! how happy I count myself to be well off, for what a pleasure it is to be able to do good!'

'One might say you took pleasure in weeping, Anna: I see the tears glistening in your eyes. But don't be so very compassionate. The poor are not much to be pitied this winter, so much has been given away to them—coals, bread, potatoes, everything in abundance. Only yesterday I paid a subscription of fifty francs, and I willingly confess to you that I would much rather give my money through others than go myself into all those dirty dwellings.'

'Adèle! you don't know the real poor people. Don't judge of them from the ragged beggars who look upon begging as a good trade, and purposely tear and soil their clothes to excite pity. Come with me, dear; I will show you working people whose clothes are not torn, whose rooms are not uncleanly, and whose mouths will not open only to beg, but only to thank and to bless for what is freely given to them. You will see terrible hunger and hardship, the frozen black bread between the stiffened fingers of the children, the tears of the mother, the despair of the father. Oh! if you cast your eyes on this silent picture of suffering, what joy will you feel to be able to change all this misery with a little money! You will see the poor children skipping about and hanging on to your clothes; the mother, with clasped hands, smiling gratefully at you; the father, in joyful forgetfulness, pressing your hand in his hard rough one. And then what happy tears will you, too, shed, Adèle! Ah! the recollection of such scenes affects me too much, my friend.'

Whilst Anna, with deep feeling and quivering

voice, thus described her experience, her friend did not speak. The emotion of her friend had touched her, and when Anna looked at her she was taking her handkerchief out of her muff to wipe away tears which were running down her cheeks.

'Anna,' she said, 'I shall go with you to visit the poor. I have money enough with me, let us devote this morning to the good work. Oh, how glad I am that I met you!'

The good Anna gazed at her friend with emotion, and her face told how happy she felt to have found another benefactress for her poor fellow-citizens. Accompanied by Adèle she went on a few steps further, to a house where she knew she would meet with distress. The house at whose threshold she was standing when she first saw her friend was forgotten. This was excusable, for she had never yet entered it, and was then only going in to see if perhaps it contained some poor families as yet unknown to her.

In one room of this house before which the benevolent lady had been standing dwelt an unfortunate family. Four bare walls were the silent witnesses of their sufferings and misery. The air in the room was almost as cold as in the street. On the hearth burned a little fire, kept alive by pieces of broken old furniture, and only from time to time fitfully flickering into a faint flame. In a bed in the middle of the room lay a sick child, which could not be more than a year old; its pale face, thin little arms, and sunken eyes, plainly told that it would soon be laid in a yet colder cradle in the grave. On a stool beside the bed sat a woman, who was still young, covering her face with both her hands. Her clothes, of faded washed-out stuff, did not tell that poverty which openly demands help; rather would one gather from its cleanliness, and from the many places where it was neatly mended, that she did all she could to conceal her need.

Every now and then a heavy sigh rose from her bosom, and tears ran through her fingers, with which she was covering her face. At the least movement of the child she raised her head, looked at its faded cheeks with sobbing and shuddering, pressed the thin coverlet closer to its cold limbs, and then sank down back again, weeping and in despair.

For a long time the woman had been sitting like one asleep upon the stool, the sick child had not moved, and she had not raised her head. She appeared to be no longer weeping, for no drops were now to be seen on her fingers. The room seemed like a chamber of the dead.

Suddenly a weak voice sounded from the hearth, 'Mother! mother, dear! I am so hungry!'

He who thus complained was a boy from five to six years old, who sat at the corner of the hearth, crouched up as near as possible to the fire. He trembled with cold, and one could almost hear the chattering of his teeth. Whether the woman had not heard his complaint, or whether she felt it impossible to satisfy his desire or not, she did not reply, and remained sitting motionless.

Again a moment of silence followed, then the boy's voice was heard once more: 'Mother, dear, I am so hungry! Oh, give me a little piece of bread!'

This time she raised her head, for the boy's voice was piercing, and went like a knife through the mother's heart; despair was to be read in her face as she replied:—

'Hans, dear, be quiet! I am dying with hunger myself, my poor child, and there is nothing for you in the house.'

'Oh, mother, I have such a pain,—only a little bit of bread, oh! please.'

The boy's appearance was now so imploring, starvation was so plainly written on his face, that the poor mother sprang up as if she would do something desperate. With trembling haste she put her hand under the coverlet of the bed, and drew out a little halfpenny loaf, which she gave to the boy with these words:—

'There, Hans! that is what I kept to make some broth for your poor little sister; but, methinks, she won't want it, poor little lamb!'

Her voice quivered, for her mother's heart was riven with pain. As soon as Hans saw the bread, he sprang up, seized the little loaf with both hands, like a wolf darting at his prey.

Hastily, the boy pressed his teeth into the bread, till he had eaten more than half of it, then he suddenly stopped, looked at it eagerly more than once, several times brought it near to his mouth, but ate none of it. At last he got up, went slowly to the sitting woman, shook her by the arm as if to awaken her from sleep, handed her the piece of bread, and said in a sweet voice:—

'Mother, dear, there! I have spared that piece for our Miechen. I am very hungry, and still in great pain, but when father comes home, I shall get a piece of bread and butter—shan't I, mother?'

The poor woman threw both her arms round the good child, and pressed him to her breast; a moment after she let them fall down again into her lap, and sank into her previous despair. Hans crept softly up to his sick little sister, and kissed her on her thin cheeks.

(To be continued.)

GROUPS OF BIRDS AND BEASTS.

BIRDS and other animals, when collected in numbers together, have curious technical names applied to them. It is right to say,—

A covey of Partridges	A flock of Geese
A nide of Pheasants	A cast of Hawks
A wisp of Snipe	A trip of Dottrell
A bevy of Quails	A herd of Swine
A flight of Doves or Swallows	A skulk of Foxes
A muster of Peacocks	A pack of Wolves
A siege of Herons	A drove of Oxen
A building of Rocks	A sounder of Hogs
A brood of Grouse	A troop of Monkeys
A plump of Wild Fowl	A pride of Lions
A stand of Plovers	A sleuth of Bears
A watch of Nightingales	A shoal of Herrings
A clattering of Choughs	A swarm of Bees



A ROBBER CLEVERLY CAUGHT.

IT was in a beautiful summer time. The trees were casting long shadows, the birds were singing sweetly to each other, evening was coming on. A young man was passing through the Bakony Forest in Hungary; he was quite alone; the wood was dark, and people had told him of a band of robbers who prowled through it. The solitary traveller carried a purse well filled with silver dollars, which did not belong to him. He had no weapons, however, except a knotted stick, which he carried in his right hand. But what is wood against iron and lead? If the man were attacked, it seemed as if there would be little chance for him.

Now the sun went down altogether. The shadows of the trees became darker and darker. The trunks, the branches, the leaves, lost their sharp outline beneath the veil of night. The wanderer's path became narrower, the forest wilder. But this change did not trouble his brave heart; he pushed aside the branches which hung in his way and trudged sturdily onward. Hour after hour went by. It was past midnight. The moon had risen and cast her mild light upon the forest. Will the wanderer reach the end of his journey unharmed? Will the sharp eye of the robbers discover him? The danger this time appears to be happily passed by. Yes, appears; but one should not boast of the night before the morning.

There is a place in the forest where many trunks of trees tell that the woodcutter's axe has been busy. The wanderer arrives at this spot and—he is no more alone! Who can it be? The drawn sword in the stranger's hand was a very significant answer.

'Your money or your life,' said the robber.

The wanderer stood still. Resistance would have been folly; he pulled out his purse and handed it to the robber.

'Take it,' he said, 'for you are stronger than I am.'

The robber took the money, and was about to disappear in the forest.

'Stop!' said the traveller; 'first do me a favour.'

'And what is that?' asked the robber.

'You must cut off a joint of my little finger.'

'That is contrary to our rules,' replied the robber. 'We only strike where we meet with resistance.'

'Good,' said the traveller; 'but you can make an exception in my case. The money does not belong to me. If I come back with a sound skin, people will say that I am the thief myself; half a finger will save my honour.'

'That is reasonable enough,' answered the robber.

'I will do as you wish.'

The traveller laid his left hand, with his little finger stretched out, upon the nearest stump; the robber raised his sword and smote with all his strength—the traveller drew away his finger and the sword cleft into the wood.

'Now!' exclaimed the traveller, 'now we are matched as to arms.' Then, quick as lightning, he sprang upon the robber's breast, and before the miscreant could pull his sword out of the tree he had mastered him entirely.

A fortnight after, in the nearest town, a robber-chief was led out to suffer the extreme penalty of the law.
J. F. C.



A Robber cleverly caught.

Chatterbox.



Saved by the Drum.

SAVED BY THE DRUM.

A TRUE STORY.



NEARLY a hundred and thirty years ago, on a bright summer's day, a party of English soldiers were scattered over the heather which grew on the side of a beautiful mountain-glen in the far north of Scotland. If you could have heard their loud and sometimes angry voices, you would have understood their errand better than did the natives of that region; for their English speech

was as strange as their business was unwelcome to the plaided Highlanders.

If they now and again met a countryman, they questioned him with fierce eagerness; but the cotters generally avoided the soldiers, and as their route lay over a vast mountainous and often trackless district they were left to pursue their search unaided. And a search it was which gave them no little amount of trouble!

Often did the officer in command dismount to follow the winding of some sheep-path, which led to caves of great extent, or to ravines, which might have concealed a little army; and as often did he return angry and unsuccessful. These useless efforts did not tend to improve the temper of the dinnerless men, whose appetites were wonderfully sharpened by the keen mountain air; and had the luckless man for whom they sought been within hearing, he might well have trembled at the unsparing threats of summary death from the disappointed Southrons. Scotland was at that time in a woeful state. The smiling valleys and purple heather, which now attract and delight the traveller, had each a sad story of bloodshed or ruin, the recollection of which made the miserable peasantry hate the red-coats who caused their calamities. The smoking thatch of many a humble farmstead, the empty folds, and the wasted harvest-fields, all spoke of war in its most cruel form. The great battle of Culloden, in which thousands had fallen fighting for a hopeless cause, had filled the country with widows and orphans.

The chieftains who had led their clans against the Duke of Cumberland's troops were specially marked by the Government for destruction, and large sums of money were freely offered for their capture, half of which would have enriched whole districts, if amongst the starving people there could be found any by whom the offered bribe would have been accepted. Long did the Government refuse to believe that the Scotch peasants could hold out against the tempting bait; and great was the wonder that a race, who were regarded by the educated classes in England as little better than savages, would hesitate to reveal the hiding-places of their fallen leaders.

The party we have seen in search were sent to bring, 'dead or alive,' a gentleman whose powerful aid had been exerted on behalf of the unfortunate Prince Charles Edward. He had spared neither life nor wealth in the cause of the young Pretender; and had you seen the flames rising from the roofless

walls of his castle, you would not have asked for further proof of his love to the House of Stuart.

Cluny MacPherson was as beloved by his clansmen for his personal qualities as he was revered for his rank and position. The meanest labourer on his estates would as soon have offered his own life, or that of his favourite child, to the sword of the red-coat, as he would have listened to the offer of blood-money for his chief; and the 10,000*l.* which King George's ministers had fixed as the price of this rebel subject's head, was scorned as the roadside dust by men who rarely tasted a meal of meat. The company was at last recalled by the order of the commanding officer, and, as further search seemed useless, they prepared to return to their quarters; when, on reaching a sharp bend in the road, they came upon a young lad, who carried in his hand what proved, on inspection, to be a savoury dinner of venison. In an instant he was surrounded, and a pistol being held to his head he was charged with being in the service, and aiding in the concealment of, the missing chieftain. His hesitating manner and confused answers were regarded as proof of the fact, and he was ordered, under pain of instant death, to conduct the party to the hiding-place for which he was evidently bound. The poor boy, confounded and stunned by the sudden appearance of the soldiers, only prayed for mercy and for life, promising, in return, to guide them to the cave where his master was hidden.

Once more the party altered their course, and the youth was placed in the front—a soldier on either side carrying a loaded musket, which he was ready to discharge at the first sign of treachery. As they wearily marched for two or three miles into the wildest part of the country, the rigour of his captors slightly abated, and they even began to joke with the boy on his errand and his simplicity. He having a little recovered his spirits gazed at the arms and accoutrements of his new companions with all a rustic's wonder. Greatly did he marvel at the weapon which the drummer carried; and when in broken English he desired to know what sort of animal was carried in so large a cage, the question provoked peals of laughter from his guards. In reply the drummer beat a tattoo, which afforded immense delight to the young Highlander, who offered him the dinner he was still carrying in exchange for the pleasure of handling the wonderful instrument. In nowise averse to the proposal, the drummer quickly slipped off the belts by which the drum was suspended, and the boy arranged them around his own neck. No sooner did he get possession of the coveted treasure than he seized the drumsticks, and with no feeble hand he plied them, till the hills far and wide echoed with the sound, and the soldiers called on him with many an angry word to desist. They soon arrived at the mouth of a cave cleverly concealed by overhanging shrubs, and a rush was made to surprise and capture the helpless prisoner. But deep was their mortification and terrible their rage to find traces indeed in abundance of the recent occupation of the cavern, but the chief—where was he? Gone—beyond the reach of his persecutors, who sought in vain for any clue to his retreat. The distant roll of the drum had warned him of the approach of the

soldiers; and, thanks to the ingenious love of his humble follower, he had once more escaped 'from the snare of the fowler.'

The disappointment of the men and their leader was intense, but no suspicion fell upon the lad, whose almost idiotic appearance never suggested the clever device by which he had saved his beloved master, and he was set at liberty. After hiding for nine years amongst his devoted and faithful people, Chuny MacPherson finally escaped to France, where he remained till his death. B.

HARVESTING AMONG GLACIERS.



UNDER THE WETTERHORN, OR
PEAK OF STORMS.

BEFORE we relate the little incident which gave occasion to our sketch, we will endeavour to place before our readers a short account of our ramble through the grassy pass of the Scheideck, on the way to the Wetterhorn. We will assume the traveller to start (as we did) from Meyringen. Men who at home could not walk five or six miles without fatigue, will walk their thirty miles over a Swiss pass without difficulty; come in to dinner with a good appetite, and after dinner saunter about in the neighbourhood, or visit some sight easy to reach.

In commencing our journey, which becomes steep and rugged, we shortly come upon the Torrent of Reichenbach: this descends nearly 2000 feet in a succession of rapids, and falls into the Aar below. On we ascend, higher and higher, the huge mass of the Wetterhorn before us.

We now come to the Baths of Rosenlin, where there are a grand glacier and ice-cave, well worth a special description did our space permit. After long climbing we get to the summit of the pass, 6500 feet above the sea-level, and rest at the little inn of Steinboch.

The Wetterhorn here rises in a perpendicular wall of limestone rock, 12,000 feet in height: beginning to rise apparently a hundred yards off. But your eye deceives you in this clear air and amid these tremendous magnitudes. The base of the precipice is in reality more than a mile away; seemingly it is not safe to go under, for every now and again you hear a tremendous roar; and looking towards the Wetterhorn you see a mass of what looks like powdery snow sliding swiftly down the rock. You are astonished that so small a thing should make so great a noise. But that is an avalanche; and if you were nearer you would know that what seemed powdery snow was indeed hundreds of tons of ice, in huge blocks and masses. And if a village of chalets had stood in the way, that slide of powdery snow would have swept it to destruction. Avalanches are the normal state of things in this Bernese Oberland; we have stood near the Wengern Alp, and both seen and heard them in quicker succession than we could turn our eyes to each noise. As we descend by the mountain wall we note many other peaks, chief among them is the Schreckhorn: you also notice a

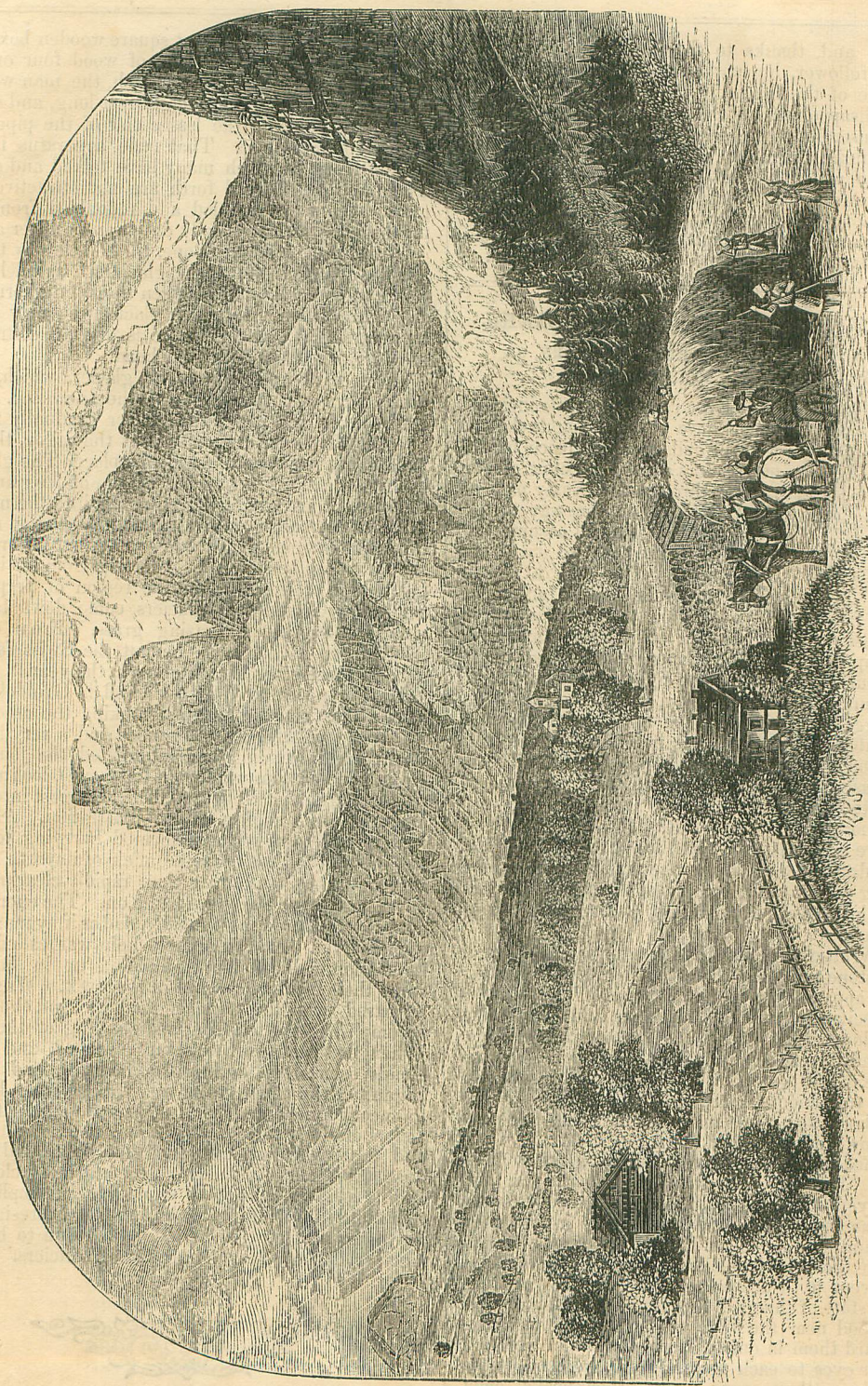
man standing beside a great square wooden box, like a small tub, fixed on a stake of wood four or five feet high; and when we approach, the man will fit to that box a wooden pipe, eight feet long, and sticking his tongue into the lesser end of the pipe will strongly blow into it. That rude apparatus is the Alpine Horn, of which many have talked and sung. The few notes brayed forth are not attractive, but grand echoes are doubled and redoubled from the mountains, which gradually die away in upper air.

We now descend the slope, till a little way to the left we approach the upper glacier of Grindelwald, filling up the great gulf between the Wetterhorn and the Schreckhorn. Into this glacier you may enter by an artificial tunnel; the ice is dirty, and streams of water pour from it on your head.

Belts of fir-trees fringe the glacier, which, like other glaciers, comes far below the snow-line. For as the ice which forms the glacier gradually melts away at the lower extremity next the valley, the ice from above presses on and fills its place. The glacier is, in fact, a slowly advancing stream of ice; and all the glaciers are gradually retreating into the mountains, as increasing cultivation and population make the lower extremity melt away somewhat faster than the water can be supplied. Starting from far in the icy bosom of the Alps, in the region of perpetual snow, the Grindelwald glaciers come down to the richest and greenest grazing grass. From every knoll where a chalet can be put the Swiss farmer gets his three crops of rich grass in the year.

Having now arrived at our hôtel in Grindelwald, after a short stay we intended making the ascent of the Wengern Alp, but the guides said a very heavy storm was impending and interdicted the journey. From our bedroom window (a lofty one), looking on to the church and village, we beheld a most interesting scene, the subject of our illustration. All the waiters and farm-servants seemed hurrying to and fro, evidently intent on some affair of import. This turned out to be no other than rapidly clearing the hay-fields before the storm came on. The enormous fields were cleared most rapidly, and as if by magic to the observer. Every available help was called into requisition. Babies were huddled up in baskets while their mothers assisted in the work. Waggons appeared upon the scene of action. And thus was accomplished the clearing and stacking of the hay. When the good work was far advanced, and when clouds seemed to darken the heavens, and mists began to drive through the valley, the waiters began to uncork numerous bottles of wine, to stimulate the action of the numerous male and female workers; and thus, while we continued our interested gaze upon the scene, the fields were completely cleared, and a marked change of scene was accomplished, thoroughly illustrating the industry and foresight of the Swiss people. It was indeed a scene to be remembered, that 'Harvesting among Glaciers.'





The Wetterhorn, or Peak of Storms.



A STORY OF A WHEELBARROW.

(Continued from page 79.)

SLEEP well, then, Miechen dear,' said the boy, and returned to the hearth, where he crouched down again in silence.

This was just at the time when the benevolent lady was standing on the threshold of the door, and perceived her friend coming in the distance.

Another whole hour passed away before the un-

happy mother aroused herself from her deep melancholy. She too was hungry, she was feeling the pangs and agony of starvation. But she sat at that dying bed, and watched in anguish for the terrible hour when she should see her child depart for ever from her.

At ten o'clock something seemed to rouse both the boy and his mother at the same time. She sprang up from the stool and he from the hearth, and both cried out at the same time:—

'Oh! there is father, Hans!'

'Oh! mother; there is father!'

A cheerful smile gave a new expression to the features of both. They had heard the noise of a wheel at the door, and hastened to meet him whom they expected. But a man entered the room before they had reached the door. Whilst he shook the snow from off his shoulders, Hans had taken hold of one of his hands, as if he wished to draw his father further into the room. His other hand the man held out to his wife as he gazed at her with deep sorrow. At last he sighed out,—

'Theres, we are very unfortunate. My wife, I have now been standing the whole morning at the railway station with my wheelbarrow, and I have not earned a penny. What shall we do now? I wish indeed that I were dead!'

The poor man's head hung down in despair, his eyes were fixed on the ground, and by the clenching of his fists showed that a desperate struggle was going on within him.

The woman, forgetting her own sorrow, and thinking only of the anguish of her husband, threw her arms round his neck, and answered, sobbing:—

'Alas! be composed—be silent—don't talk so—it won't always last like this. It is not your fault that we are so unfortunate.'

'Father! father!' cried the boy, 'I am so hungry! Shall I get a piece of bread and butter now?'

These words produced a terrible emotion in the man; all his limbs trembled, his looks fell like those of a madman on the complaining child, and he stared at him for a long time so wildly and strangely that Hans fled in terror back to the hearth, from whence he sobbed out to his father,—

'Ah, father dear! I won't do it again.'

In the same excited state of mind and body the man now approached the cot, and with keen eyes gazed at the little dying babe, which once more opened its fading eyes, and fixed them on its father.

'Theres!' he exclaimed, 'really I cannot bear it any longer. It is all over; it must, then, come to this at last.'

'What is it, then? Oh, my God! what is the matter with you?'

The man, in whose breast a severe conflict had taken place, was silent at once, and perceiving what great anguish he had caused his wife by his exclamation of despair, he took her hand and said, calmly and tenderly, 'Theres! you know, wife, that since we have been married I have always worked honestly; not a single day have I allowed to pass without caring for you and the children. And now, after ten years' hard work, shall I be obliged to beg? Must I now beg for the bread which till now I have earned by the sweat of my brow? Theres, I cannot do it, even should we all die of want and misery. Look! I turn red with shame when I only think of it. To beg! No! only one other means remains to us to get food for a short time. It is very hard indeed for me, wife, but I must go and sell our wheelbarrow at the auction to-day. Perhaps before we have spent the money I shall receive for it I shall have got work again, and then we will save to buy a new one. Wait now, then, half an hour, and I will bring you back something to eat.'

This wheelbarrow was the only article by which the poor workman could earn his bread; no wonder, then, that it was very hard for him to sell it. His wife, too, was very sad at this decision, to which want compelled them; but she must consent to it, for her mother's heart, before everything, cried for help for her starving children.

'Yes; go to the auction, then, and sell the wheelbarrow, for our poor little Hans is quite bent double from the pangs of hunger, and I myself can scarcely stand on my legs, and that innocent babe that lies gasping there. Oh, that thou wert already an angel in Heaven, sweet child!'

Here her tears again began to flow, and a fit of emotion, as before, shook her husband's frame; his fists were again clenched. However, he mastered himself, and sprang out of the door. They heard immediately the rolling of a wheelbarrow being hastily driven on, but it soon passed away.

CHAPTER II.

REGARDLESS of the cold weather, the auction was held as usual in the market, as on every Friday, in Antwerp. Here it was the custom for every one to bring anything they had to sell to be put up for auction. Not far from the auctioneer's stand might be seen, among other similar objects, a wheelbarrow, close beside which stood a man who looked utterly miserable. His arms were crossed on his breast; he turned his eyes, moist with tears, from the wheelbarrow to the auctioneer, who was busy selling other things. From time to time this man stamped impatiently on the ground, as if painful thoughts were torturing him, then he fell into deep melancholy if his glance fell on the wheelbarrow which had hitherto served him to win his bread as an honest labourer.

Whilst he was thus sunk in misery, two young ladies came with hasty steps across the market. One of them must have remarked the painful expression on the face of the workman, for she stopped her companion a few steps further on and asked her:—

'See, Adèle, what sorrow is to be read on the features of yonder man?'

'What man, my dear?'

'That one there, who is stamping with his foot; certainly, Adèle, he is in great distress!'

'It may be, Anna, that it is only caused by some vexation.'

'No, Adèle; I know the look only too well. I am sure that the workman yonder is a victim of the long winter. Only look; his clothes are not dirty and torn. Let us go to him; I will inquire the reason of his trouble.'

The two ladies turned back to the man, but just as they approached him he was addressed by a third person, who seemed also to belong to the labouring classes. Clapping him on the shoulder he said,—

'Well! what do you think of the weather? Cold! eh? Come along with me, I'll stand treat for a glass of grog!'

The sorrowing workman quickly moved away his shoulder from the hand laid upon it, but did not answer. The other, surprised at this, looked him more narrowly in the face, and perceived the wild look about his eyes.

'Well, now!' he cried, 'what's the matter with you, friend?'

The reply did not follow quickly, so that the two ladies had time to approach nearer, and heard what the man whom they thought so wretched said.

A dull voice, which betrayed deep sorrow, said at last,—'See, Gerhard, you talk to me of grog! but I would rather die than drink any spirits now! If you knew, friend, what terrible want is oppressing me!'

These words were spoken with such deep anguish, that Gerhard was quite moved by them, and at once left his joking manner to speak more seriously. He took his comrade's hand, and asked him with evident sympathy, 'How so, friend? what is the matter with you, then? You look indeed as if you really were about to die? Is Theres dead?'

'No, no, not so bad as that, Gerhard. But I will tell you, as you are our friend. You know it, don't you, Gerhard? I have never been too idle to earn my bread, and I have, thank God, hitherto, always been able to earn it; but now,—now it's all over. My Theres, good woman—alas! poor thing! it's two days now that she has eaten nothing; our little Hans is bent double with hunger, and my youngest child, our Miechen, is perhaps dead by this time. Truly, Gert, when I think much about it I feel as if I could make away with myself. Could you beg, do you think, Gert?'

'Beg! no, certainly not, as long as I had a couple of hands to my body.'

'Quite right, I think the same. But still it has gone so far, that we have sold and pledged everything but our wheelbarrow, which stands there. We had saved that, that I might earn our bread hardly enough by it. But if it is God's will, it must go too. I hope the auctioneer will come quickly, that I may take some bread to my wife and children.'

'There he is! But tell me quickly, do you live still in the Winkel Street?'

'Yes.'

The auctioneer now came round to the spot where the distressed workman was waiting, and cried in a loud voice,—

'This way all who want to buy! Purchasers of wheelbarrows, come here!' A bitter smile passed over the features of the poor labourer.

The two ladies spoke to each other in a whisper about something which seemed to give them pleasure.

The auctioneer began again,—'30 francs for the wheelbarrow! 30 francs!—25, it is as good as new; it is giving it away at such a price—20 francs!'

One of the ladies nodded her head, and the auctioneer continued,—

'20 francs, going at 20 francs! Will no one bid more?'

Now others began to bid, but the lady kept up the price higher and higher. The auctioneer turned from one to the other to observe the nods of the bidders.

'21 francs!' '22!' '24!' '25!' '27!' '27 francs! No one more? 27 francs for the first, for the second, for the third time! I wish you much pleasure in your bargain!'

The lady said a few words to the auctioneer's attendant, who at once exclaimed in a loud voice,—

'It will be paid for at once.'

(Concluded in our next.)

THE SUN AND THE STARS.

ONE day, when the Sun was going down,
He said to a star hard by,
'Sparkle your best; for you see, my friend,
I'm going out of the sky.'

Now, the little Star was old as the sun,
Though rather small for his age,
So he kept quite still in the yellow light,
And looked as wise as a sage.

'I'm going, you see!' cried the Sun again,
'Going right out of the sky!'
And he slid away, but not out of sight
Of that little star hard by.

The little Star, peeping, saw him go
On his gorgeous western way,
And twinkled with fun as he said, 'O Sun!
You're in for another day!'

And as for going out of the sky,
Your majesty knows you can't;
You are shining somewhere, full and strong,
In spite of your rays aslant.'

No answer. Then the Star grew bright,
And sparkled as neighbours came;
He told the joke to the twinkling crowd,
And they laughed the Sun to shame.

One merry star was so amused
He shot across the sky,
And all the others bobbed and blinked
To see him speeding by.

But, after awhile, a rosy light
Appeared on the eastern side;
And, one by one, the stars grew shy,
And tried in the sky to hide.

'Ho! ho!' the Sun broke forth, 'Ho! ho!
Just stay where you are, my dears,
And shine away, for you can't be seen
When all my light appears.

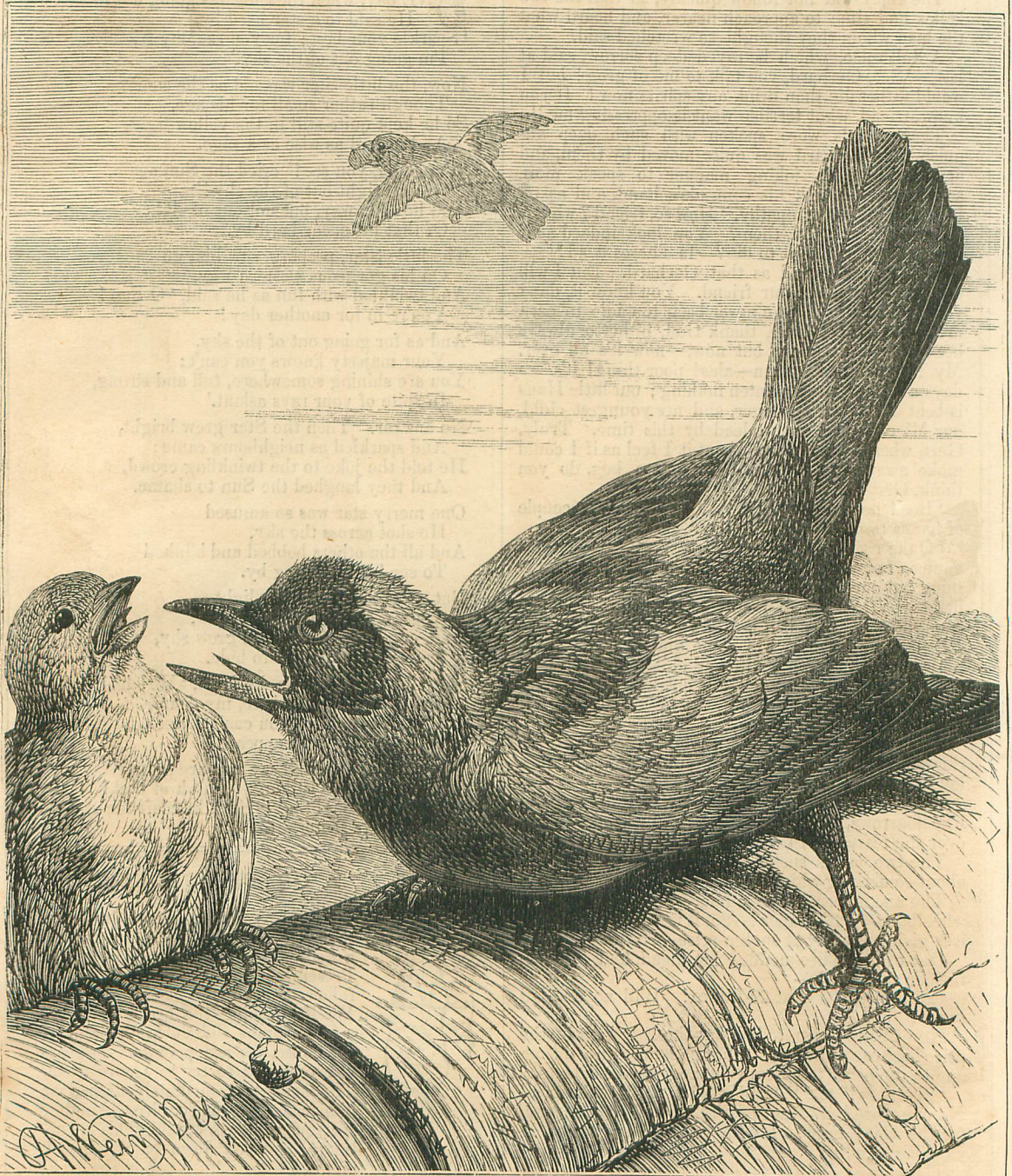
The people below will say you are gone,
Though you're shining. Think of that!
Well, they thought all night I had left the sky,
So it's only tit for tat.'

A GREEDY JACKDAW.



JACKDAW was observed to fly off with a piece of bread to the roof of a house, where he began to eat it. Presently two sparrows, which had followed, perched close beside him. Whilst pecking the bread to pieces a few crumbs slid down the roof of the house, when a poor hungry sparrow ventured to try to secure them. The jackdaw immediately dashed at him, leaving the larger piece. Another sparrow, who was watching his opportunity, pounced down on the bread, and flew away with it before the jackdaw had recovered from his surprise

at his boldness. So it was that greediness paid the penalty it well deserved.



A Greedy Jackdaw.

Chatterbox.



Capriole dragging his colleague to the Cook.

TWO VERY CLEVER DOGS.



HERE lived, not long ago, on a fine estate between Vienna and Mödling, a well-to-do gentleman. Mr. W—— had not only horses, sheep, and oxen, but also a splendid and clever dog, for which several people had already offered him large sums; but in vain. At the beginning of 1868 it happened that Mr. W——

drove nearly every day into

Vienna. Cheerful and merry as the gentleman usually had been, he was now gloomy and downcast; and as he was returning at eleven o'clock one night from the capital, to which he had driven in the morning, he suddenly pulled up his beautiful horses and threw the reins, as well as a five-florin bank-note, to the coachman, with the words,—‘John, horses and carriage belong to you henceforth; farewell!’

He then hurried to his room, followed by his dog. The faithful John suspected that all was not right. He called the groom, gave him the horses in charge, and hastened to his master's house. Scarcely had he reached the hall when he heard the report of a shot, and when the coachman entered the apartment what did he behold? His master was sitting, pale and in consternation, at his desk, gazing at the photograph of a lady which lay before him, holding a pistol in his right hand! The shot was meant for his head; but at the moment when Mr. W—— had placed the instrument of murder against his forehead, and had pulled the trigger, the intelligent dog, to whom the behaviour of his master had seemed suspicious, had sprung upon him and seized his hand just at the right moment, so that the shot, instead of passing through his brain, had gone through the window. When the coachman entered, the dog was still standing beside his master, and holding the hand with the pistol in it firmly between his teeth, and would not let it go till the servant had seized the weapon and put it away. Then this four-legged saviour of his master's life sprang joyfully barking up and down the room.

After this terrible excitement Mr. W—— had a severe attack of fever; but he recovered, both in mind and body, and quite lost his gloomy melancholy. He rewarded John by giving him a very handsome sum of money, and declared that for no price in the world would he ever sell his favourite dog, to whom he owed his life as well as his preservation from the terrible sin of suicide.

An uncommonly clever dog, too, was Capriole, who belonged to the household of a rich chamberlain at the French court. The head cook, M. Martin, had taught the animal to fetch and carry all sorts of things, as well as to turn the spit. This last wearisome service was performed by Capriole and a colleague on alternate days. One day when the chamberlain received an unexpected visitor some meat had to be roasted quickly, and though it was not his day, the head-cook wanted to fasten Capriole on to the spit; but the dog considering this an unjust attack upon his

rights, growled, and showed his teeth to his master. When the cook took up the stick and was about to thrash the rebel Capriole fled, found his colleague, whose turn it was to-day, seized him by the ear and dragged him to the cook, as if he wished to say, ‘Here is the right one, fasten him on;’ and laughing, M. Martin took the hint.

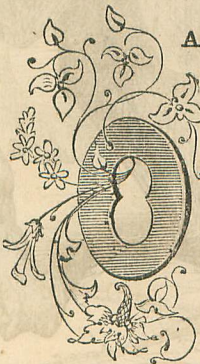
It was Capriole's duty to carry to the chamberlain's castle, which was about two miles distant from the town of Langres, meat, bread, coffee, and cheese. The cook would repeat to the clever animal twice the name of the butcher, baker, or grocer; then Capriole would take the market-basket down from the nail into his mouth, a note with the orders written upon it was placed inside, and the dog would then run merrily off on his errand. When he was on service nothing would keep him back from his duty, and he always went backwards and forwards quicker than the servants of the house.

But one day the faithful messenger had a disagreeable commission. He had to fetch eels from the fishmonger's. The woman neglected to kill the eels first, but wrapped them up alive loosely in a cloth, which she put into the basket. At first all went on well enough: but the slippery fish wriggled out of the cloth, and put their heads out of the basket. Capriole shook it violently and the eels went back again. But soon they renewed the game. Now the dog drove them back again with his paws. But this was of little avail; they soon put their heads out farther than ever, and one nearly escaped altogether. The dog carefully seized the offender in his teeth and placed him back in the basket. But not long after they again became restless, and one again escaped. The dog's patience was now at an end. He gave the eel a mortal bite in the neck and laid him back again in the basket.

All this had naturally taken up a good deal of time, so that M. Martin had had to send a servant after the dog, who had witnessed the affair. Capriole was highly praised for his conduct, but the sight of eels was ever after so disagreeable to him, that whenever he saw these creatures he ran away from them howling.

J. F. C.

A SHOEMAKER'S BILL.



ON the shores of the Rhine, where beautiful mountains are reflected in its waters, lies a little village, at some height above the high road. Behind it rises a steep rock, crowned by the ruins of an old castle. The village has no church, but it has a good school-house. In this there lived several years ago an honest schoolmaster. I must not mention either the name of the village or of the schoolmaster, for the good man may, perhaps, be living now, and it would not be pleasant for him to be talked about by strangers, even if those strangers were only little folk.

The master had a wife and eight children. This, with the scanty income which his post brought him, was no small burden. A hundred and fifty thalers (23*l.*) a-year is not much. It does not amount to much more than half a thaler, that is, 1*s.* 6*d.* a-day. And when ten people, who have a healthy appetite, have daily to be fed and to be clothed upon it, and when the other requirements which a household demands have also to come out of it, it is easy to reckon that it costs no small work and self-denial to make both ends meet.

In the pretty school-house, therefore, the meals every day were simple and somewhat scanty. Potatoes were, for dinner and supper, the first and last dish; there was no butter with them, indeed, only salt. In the morning an oatmeal or milk porridge, and on Sunday a cup of thin coffee, was the only luxury which came upon the poor schoolmaster's table. But yet the parents, and the children too, were healthy and strong, and the latter were as blooming as roses. With all their poverty they were a very happy family, as the blessing of God rested on the house, and there was peace and love between parents and children. The master was faithful and diligent in his post, and so his school did him great credit. The parish, therefore, thought a great deal of the man, and his superiors honoured him for his faithful diligence.

But in spite of all this, as so often happens, the honest schoolmaster remained at his modest post with its scanty salary. For twelve years he and his faithful wife had bravely struggled on; but now their wants increased every day, and other trials increased also. As the children grew older and bigger the more did they require in the way of clothes and shoes. The expenses in this respect became greater, and therefore their meals were more sparing. Then the question about the education of the elder children had to be faced. The schoolmaster himself was of a God-fearing and pious disposition. When his heart was very full and heavy he would go into his chamber, and pray there to his Father in Heaven, and was soon comforted again. Only he never could bear to see the tears in his dear wife's eyes; that was a terrible trial to him, and made his burden lie much more heavily on his heart.

The year 1847 had come. A hard, sad year that was for poor people. The harvest had been a poor one, and even the potatoes had failed; to this was added the terrible potatoe disease. The price of provisions had risen quickly. Our honest schoolmaster had during that year the greatest anxiety and trouble in maintaining his family. His bill to the shoemaker had by degrees increased till it now amounted to twenty-five thalers, and the poor man did not know when or how he should ever be able to pay it. The shoemaker would readily have waited some time for the money, but there was want and distress in his house too, so he begged the schoolmaster to pay him his debt as soon as possible. Trouble and care now returned to the school-house. They rose with the good couple in the morning, and retired with them to rest at night. The good woman, indeed, tried hard not to make her husband's heart heavier by her sighs and lamentations. Only of a night when he was asleep she would weep, but in

the day she smiled cheerfully, however heavy her heart might be. But now and then she could not help giving vent to her anxieties; then her good husband took his wife by the hand, looked into her face, and said,—

'Take no heed for your life, what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink; neither for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not your life more than meat, and your body than raiment? Behold the birds of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not, therefore, of more value than they?'

Then the poor woman would be comforted again. She smiled sweetly, though sadly, as she said, 'Yes, dear husband, our good God still lives! He will never leave us nor forsake us.' And then her husband would sit down to his old rickety piano, and both would sing together their favourite hymn, beginning,—

'God still lives;

Soul, why art thou then cast down?'

And with these words and notes all their cares fled away, and comfort and peace, hope and trust, again returned to their troubled souls.

Autumn had come. The leaves on the trees were turning yellow, their branches were getting barer and barer, and the swallows were leaving the land to seek warmer quarters for the winter. The news passed through that country which excited all hearts. —The king was coming! It was reported on all sides; and the honest folk, who all loved him very much, were rejoiced at the prospect of beholding his kindly face. Everywhere people were talking and consulting together how they could best show their hearty joy at his visit. The road along which the king was to pass led him very near the village where our honest schoolmaster lived. The good man was much pleased at this, for he had never seen the king, but he loved him greatly. So he asked himself whether he could not prepare for his majesty some special little pleasure on his way; and he resolved to compose a simple song, in which he would modestly and heartily greet the beloved king. For this he would also compose a suitable melody, and practise his school-children in both. They should stand under the chestnut-trees by the side of the high road when the king came by, and welcome him by singing this hymn. The more the schoolmaster thought over it, the more did this thought please him. Perhaps the hymn would gratify the good king, but if it did no more it would excite a loyal feeling towards him in the hearts of his scholars.

On a beautiful October day, when the sun was still warm and shining pleasantly, our schoolmaster mounted the hill behind the village and sat down upon a ledge of rock, from whence he had a glorious prospect over the country around. Here he composed a plain and simple, but not the less hearty and touching, hymn. The tune for it was soon made, and then the children were taught and practised in both. In a few days they sang it splendidly, to his great delight. And so the matter was arranged. The villagers wished to be present to hear their children sing, and to declare, by a loud hurrah, the delight they felt at beholding their beloved monarch.

There was only one anxiety which often oppressed

the schoolmaster and his wife. His boots were nearly falling to pieces, and even in the upper leathers there were several large holes. It was not possible that he should stand among the other people in these, especially on the high road too, and in the presence of his king. His hat and coat, too, were not in the best condition. Still, the careful hand which blackened with ink the seams in the coat that had become white, as well as the bare places on the hat, could do much to tidy them up. But with the boots this was not possible, and it was a question whether the shoemaker, who had never yet received the twenty-five thalers, would undertake to mend them. An attempt to see whether he would be persuaded must be made; so the schoolmaster at last determined to go to the man himself, to touch his heart, if possible, by entreaties.

The shoemaker was not a hard man; he knew very well how a man feels who would gladly pay, and yet, with the best will to do so, does not find it possible. The reason why he had so often asked him for his money was because he urgently needed it for himself. When the schoolmaster showed him his boots he shook his grey head thoughtfully, and said at last, 'I see well enough that you must be helped this time. But when and how am I to get my money?'

'Only help me this once, good friend,' said the schoolmaster. 'You know that our good king is coming, and I wish with the children to sing a hymn before him. But in these boots I cannot and dare not stand before his majesty; so I entreat you to help me out of my difficulty. I promise you that you shall have your money very soon afterwards. If our God does not send us any other help, I will sell my cow and pay you out of the price. You know that I always keep my word.'

As soon as he had said this a terrible weight seemed to fall upon the poor schoolmaster's soul. Sell the cow! - Only the most pressing distress had wrung this word and promise from him. Sell the cow! and what would then become of him and his children? But now he had spoken the word and given the promise, he was firmly determined to keep it like an honest man.

'Well,' replied the shoemaker, 'I trust your word, and I will repair the boots.'

'Be so good, then, as to do them at once, and send me the bill with them,' said the master, 'that I may know how much my debt to you is.'

'It shall be done,' replied the shoemaker, as he sat down again to his work. But the poor teacher, though he had got rid of one trouble, went away with a still heavier heart. The tears came into his eyes as he thought of the future, and asked himself what was about to happen. With such a sad and troubled face he did not like to go home at once, in order not to give his wife fresh sorrows. He first went for a little walk to his favourite spot on the hill. There he wept bitterly. Then he remained sitting silently and alone, and looking up to Heaven comforted himself with the verse, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, Who is the health of my countenance and my God.' He washed his face in the running

stream on the mountain-side, wiping away all traces of his tears, and he returned to his home. Fortunately, his wife did not ask him any questions about what the shoemaker had said. She knew how much they owed the man, and she saw that he had kept the boots. So he was going to do the work, and for the rest God would provide. As she did not ask any questions her husband said nothing to her about the promise which he had made to the shoemaker.

On Sunday morning, when the schoolmaster had just dressed himself to go to church, the boots came to his and his wife's great joy. With them the shoemaker enclosed the bill. It was written rather crookedly and strangely, and ran thus:—

'Item—a pair of boots soled (the last of the bill is not paid. But he has pledged his word to sell the cow).'	Th.	S. gr.
Makes	...	14
To this the old debt	...	25
	25	14

But this must be the end of it, and of credit and my patience too. For I want my money myself very badly. Thus it remains, or it must be sued for.

'TOBIAS WERNER,
Shoemaker Master.'

As his wife was just at that moment in the kitchen, the schoolmaster, after reading it, with a sigh put the bill into the breast-pocket of his Sunday coat, in order to hide it from her if she asked no questions about it. She did not do so, and therefore the matter dropped.

On the day before the king's arrival the schoolmaster's wife asked her husband, 'Dear Fritz, have you written out a neat copy of the hymn and its tune? It is possible that the king might wish to have the hymn, in order to read it when he is alone.'

'You are right, dear Marie!' said the schoolmaster; adding, 'You women always think much further than we men do.' Then he went to his desk and took out a sheet of his best paper. First he wrote the melody down in notes, and then he added the first verse of the words to it; the other verses followed underneath, very neatly and carefully written, till the whole hymn stood ready on the paper from beginning to end. Then he put the copy into his desk, and said to his wife, 'Remind me to-morrow, that I do not forget to put the hymn in my pocket and to take it with me.'

(Concluded in our next.)

OLD ENGLAND.

WE Englishmen are a fine set of fellows, only to be equalled by our brothers in the West.

We have the largest empire in the world.

We have the longest rope in the world.

We have the largest ship in the world.

We have the finest fleet in the world.

We have the largest glass palace in the world.

We have the best roast-beef in the world.

We have the most adulterated food in the world.

We have the heaviest taxes in the world.

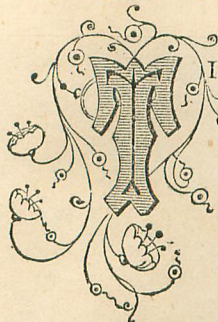
And we have the largest National Debt in the world.

With all these advantages surely we have a right to consider ourselves the real lords of the creation.



"God still lives;
Soul, why art thou cast down?"

A STORY OF A WHEELBARROW.

(Concluded from page 87.)

THE workman immediately came up to the auctioneer's stand that he might receive the money and hasten to his dwelling with it, not, however, without casting a sad look upon his wheelbarrow, when he was accosted by one of the two young ladies.

'My good man, do you want to earn something?'

He reflected for a moment,

and then asked, 'What do you wish me to do, miss?'

'We want this wheelbarrow taken home.'

'I am sorry that I can't do it, miss; I have something I must attend to at once.'

Anna, who understood poor people better than her friend, said hastily to the man, who was about to go away: 'It is to the Winkel Street we want to go.'

'Then I can do it, miss, for I am going straight there myself.'

He took the wheelbarrow, drew it out from among the many articles for sale lying around it, and followed the two ladies, who departed with hasty steps. A bitter feeling filled his breast as he thought how now he had to use what was formerly his own wheelbarrow for others. But the certainty that with the money he had received he should be able to dry the tears of his good wife, mingled comfort with his sorrow. With regret he received an order from the lady to stop before a shop. However, he had not to wait long, for the ladies were only a moment in the shop, but from it his barrow was now laden with a sack of potatoes, several large loaves of bread, some bundles of wood, and Anna herself placed carefully an earthenware pot against the sack.

Arrived at the Winkel Street the man asked where the ladies wanted the wheelbarrow taken to. Anna replied, 'Go on, it is still further on.' In spite of this direction the man stopped before a door, which Anna knew to be the same which she was about to enter that morning. The man took off his cap, and requested politely,—

'Please, miss, will you allow me to go in here for a moment?'

When she consented, he opened the door and went hastily in, but the ladies followed on his heels, and with him entered into the room.

A cold shudder passed over Anna and her friend. The scene which here opened before their eyes was terrible indeed. The young woman who had been sitting beside the bed lay senseless on the floor, her cheeks pale, her eyes closed, her lips blue, and her head sunk back against the corner of the bed, like a lifeless corpse. The little boy had taken hold of his mother's arm, and was crying out at the moment when the two ladies entered with the father, 'Mother dear, I am so hungry! a bit of bread, please!'

The man, without observing the presence of Adèle and her friend, sprang forward to his wife, called her by her name, and exclaimed in broken words,—

'Theres! Oh, my dear Theres! unhappy wife! O God, is it possible? Dead—dead of hunger and cold! Have we deserved this? Alas! alas!'

During these exclamations he struck his hand upon the table and seized a knife. But Anna, who observed this movement, with a cry of horror sprung on him and took the weapon from his hand.

'Your good wife is not dead,' she cried; 'here, take this, and run to the next shop for some wine.'

She gave him a piece of money and pointed to the door. He darted out, and disappeared.

Anna now took the unfortunate woman in her arms, and attended to her as if she had been her sister. She took an orange out of her pocket, and squeezed the juice between her blue lips, and rubbed her hands between her own. She cried out with joy when at last she saw the mother's eyes open.

During this time Adèle had not contented herself with gazing on this picture of hunger and poverty, she had, as soon as she heard the little boy's piteous appeal, hastened to the wheelbarrow and brought back the earthen pot and a loaf of bread, and placed some wood upon the fire. Scarcely had Hans seen the bread than his eyes were fixed upon it, and he again begged for bread and butter. Adèle, who in the morning had felt such disgust for poor people, now felt so touched at the sight of this bitter poverty, that she took the loaf from the table herself, and putting it against her beautiful clothes began to cut the longed-for bread and butter for the child.

'Here, my boy,' she said, 'eat it; and may you never suffer any more from hunger!'

Hans seized the bread and butter with joy, kissed his hand as a sign of gratitude, and gazed at Adèle with such sweet looks that she had to turn away her head to conceal her emotion. At the same time the mother had opened her eyes and fixed them with delight on the eating child.

She was about to express her thanks in words when the return of her husband interrupted her. He, contrary to all expectation, finding his wife alive, hastily placed a bottle on the table and fell upon her neck, covering her with kisses, amid a flood of tears; he held her in his arms tightly, as if he feared to lose her again, and exclaimed quite beside himself:—

'Theres! dear wife! are you still alive? Oh! it is nothing then! I have money for our wheelbarrow; now we can eat—be comforted. Oh, God! in all my affliction I am still happy,—yes, dear Theres, for I certainly thought that I should never see you alive again!'

Anna now approached with a cup of wine, and held it to the lips of the fainting woman.

Whilst she was swallowing the strengthening draught, her husband cast an astonished look upon Anna and her friend, who was standing further off with Hans near the hearth, holding the child's two little hands close to the fire, saying:—

'Warm your fingers then, little man, and eat your bread and butter quickly, and I will give you some more.'

The man now appeared to be awaking from a dream, it seemed as if he only now remarked for the first time the presence of the ladies.

'Miss,' he said, stuttering, 'forgive me, that I have not thanked you for the assistance you have given to my poor wife. It is, indeed, very kind of you to come into the house of such poor folk, and I thank you a thousand times.'

'Good people,' answered Anna, 'we know what hunger and cold you have endured, and what pain it would have caused you to be obliged to beg after, as honest workpeople, you had earned your bread by the sweat of your brow, but you shall not suffer from want any more! Here is some money,' she continued; 'and at your door stand potatoes, wood, and bread—that all belongs to you; the wheelbarrow too is your property,—use it for your daily profit, live honestly, and don't beg. But if hunger and cold should once more visit you, upon this card are my name and address, and you will always find in me a helper and a friend.'

Whilst Anna was thus speaking she did not hear a sound in the room, all was so still; but a flood of tears streamed from the eyes of the workman and his wife. He could not say a word, but looked from one lady to the other full of astonishment as if he could not believe what he heard. When Anna was silent, the mother, quite overwhelmed, sank from the stool upon her knees, and weeping seized Anna's hand and exclaimed, 'Oh, ladies! may God bless you with a long and happy life! May He reward you for entering our house like two angels, and saving me from death!'

'Are you happy now, mother?' said Anna.

'Oh yes, good lady, we are indeed happy now. Look at our Hans, how he is skipping about with joy before the warm fire, poor fellow! And could the innocent lamb which lies there dying speak, it too would thank you and bless you.'

At these words Anna ran to the sick child, and perceiving that want alone had brought it to death's door, she signed to Adèle to come. She who was rejoicing in the joy of the boy, now lifted him up and kissed his cheek, and came to her friend.

'Be comforted, good people,' said Anna, as she went away; 'we will send you a doctor for the sick child, and I hope that you still may see it grow up to be a comfort to you.'

A happy smile at these words passed over the faces of husband and wife. Both hastened to the door with their departing visitors, and thanks and blessings flowed from their lips.

A doctor soon after came to visit the sick child; he sent a good sister of charity who understood nursing, and she, perceiving that the babe could have more care and attention in the hospital, carried it off with her thither. Every day the mother came to see it, and every day it seemed to grow fatter and stronger; and when one day she took her husband with her, he scarcely knew his Micchen again, so plump and well had she become. Then at last, with many thanks to the good sister, the mother carried her treasure home.

When Anna and Adèle left the house they walked for a long time in silence. Their hearts were almost too full to speak. At last, after they had passed through several streets, Anna asked,—

'Well, dear Adèle, tell me, do you find poor people so horrid as some people describe them to be?'

'Oh no!' she replied; 'I am so glad I met you to-day. I seem as if something holy had elevated me, and I have a feeling which is quite new to me. I am no longer afraid of poverty. Did you not see how I took that little boy in my lap and kissed him? What a dear, sweet child!'

'Yes, the tears came into his eyes when he saw you go away. Well, dear, tell me, is there a greater happiness on earth than that which we now feel? These good people were dying of hunger, they were raising their hearts to Heaven and crying to the Lord for help. We came to them as messengers of God's mercy; they knelt before us as before angels, who announced to them that their prayer was heard, and in us they have blessed and thanked God. Oh, Adèle! if our previous life has been worthless and vain, the tears of gratitude of those people may remind us that it need be so no longer!'

'Speak no more about it,' said Adèle. 'Henceforth I will go with you every day to visit the poor and to take part in your labour of love. For to-day, for the first time, I know the heavenly joy of sacred well-doing! Oh, how unhappy are the rich who do not know it! What a sweet feeling, what happy delight they miss, when they care only for their own selfish pleasure!'

ORIGIN OF FOOLSCAP.

EVERY boy knows what foolscap paper is, but we doubt whether one in a hundred of those who use it can tell why it was so called.

When Oliver Cromwell became Protector of England, he caused the stamp of the Cap of Liberty to be placed upon the paper used by the Government. Soon after the restoration of Charles II., when he had occasion to use some paper for despatches, some of this Government paper was brought to him. On looking at it he inquired the meaning of it; and on being told he said, 'Take it away: I'll have nothing to do with a fool's cap.'

Thus originated the term *foolscap*, which has since been given to a size of writing-paper usually about 16 by 13 inches.

THE POUTER AND THE HORSE.

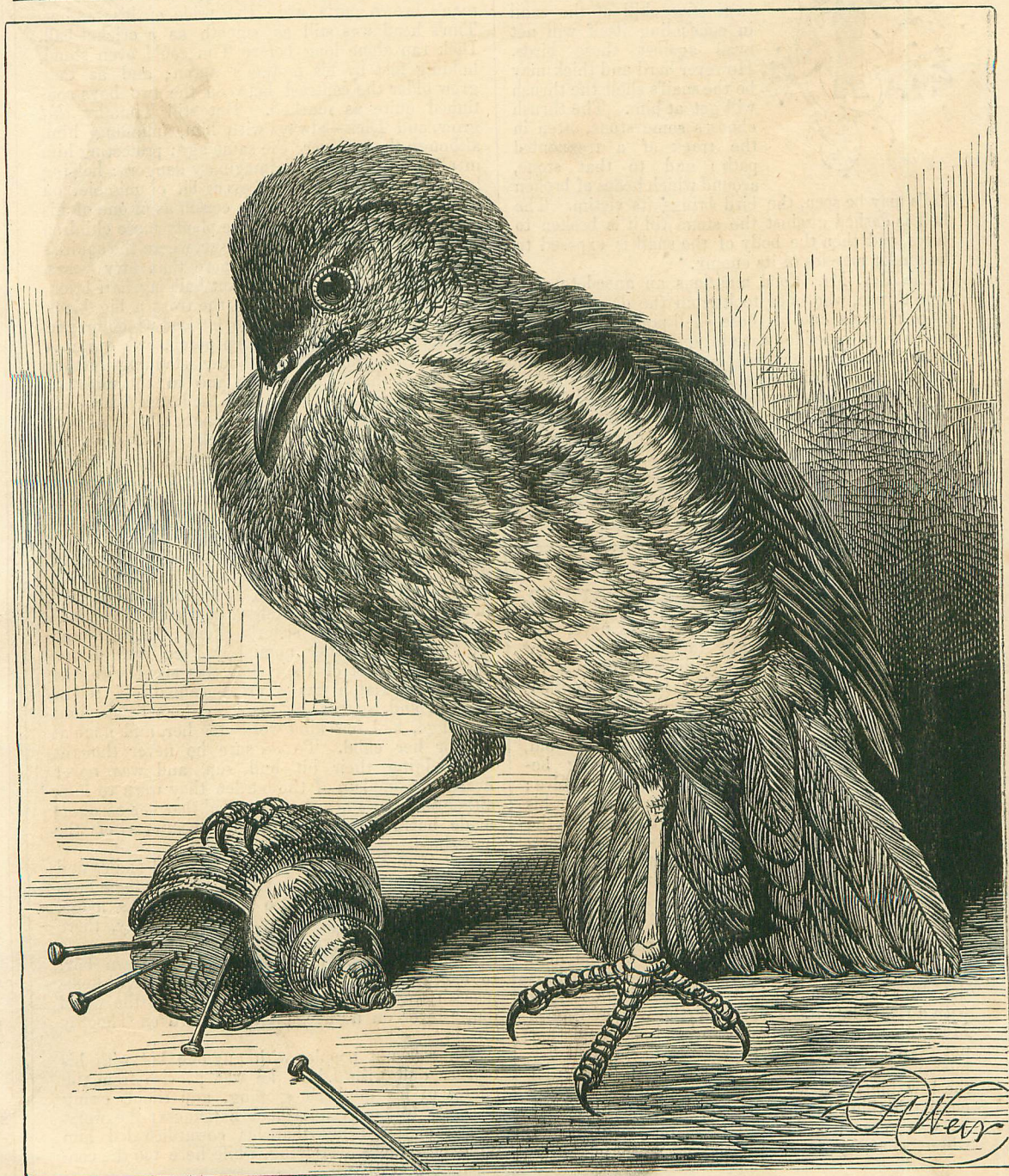


WHILST passing along a turnpike-road a gentleman noticed some pigeons feeding on the grain that fell from the nosebag attached to a horse. Every time the horse tossed his head to reach his food he sprinkled some on the ground. Presently, as his appetite became more satisfied, he ceased to do so. Whereupon a pouter pigeon, seeming to discover the cause and source of their supply, immediately flew up and pecked at the horse's head, which made him throw it up rapidly, whereby more grain was spilt. This was repeated several times; in fact, until the pigeons had all had as much as they wished for.



The Pouter and the Horse.

Chatterbox.



The Thrush and Pineushion.

THE THRUSH.

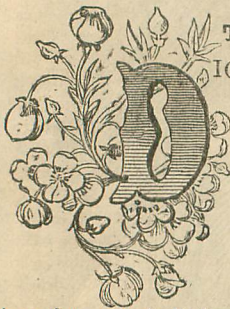


HE Thrush wages an unceasing war against snails. All the instinctive skill of the snail in concealing itself will not avail against these birds. However hard and thick may be the snail's shell, the thrush will get at him. The thrush chooses some stone, often in the track of a frequented path; and to that stone, around which heaps of broken shells may be seen, the bird brings its victim. The shell is dashed against the stone till it is broken to pieces, and then the body of the snail is exposed to the tender mercies of its enemy.

The Rev. Mr. Wood mentions an anecdote of a tame thrush, who once took from the dressing-table of its mistress one of those shell pincushions which are sold at sea-side watering-places, and tried to batter it to pieces against the hearthstone, with the expectation of finding a snail inside.

It cannot, however, be denied that both thrush and blackbird enjoy the ripe fruit—especially cherries and currants. At a small cost such fruit may be protected by nets, and though some of it may be taken during a few weeks, yet the birds give ample compensation by their destruction of snails and slugs throughout the year.

TIMOTHY'S FRIEND.



DICK HARMAN never forgot the night his Aunt Lucy died. He could remember his own mother, although little Jock, whose birth had cost her her life, was now four years old, Dick himself being between eleven and twelve; but he remembered his aunt far better, and yet the two sisters had died within the same year. Long ago, when Lucy Meadows was a pretty young girl, she had married a 'stranger,' as folk in Hartlemeads called any one not born and bred in the parish. Her father had been vexed enough at the time; for Brogg seemed to have no means of support for a wife, and no home to take one to: but the old man was more angry still, when, after two years, his daughter came back to him a broken-down woman with a sickly infant. Her sister, the wife of Squire Mervyn's gamekeeper, had been her best friend: but not even she could win poor Lucy to speak of her husband: they supposed he was dead—indeed, from the few hints she let drop, that seemed the most charitable thing to suppose about him,—at all events he was never heard of any more in Hartlemeads; where, contrary to all expectation, little Timothy

contrived—with a hard struggle for it, however—to live, and even, after a fashion, to thrive.

Such a sickly-looking baby as he was! Like nothing in the world but a wee, shrivelled old man,—and all the more so that his hair was so long in coming. At six months old, when little Dick Harman's brown curls were the pride of his mother, Tim's head was still as smooth as a cricket-ball. Dick ran alone long before Tim could even stand, holding fast by his mother's apron; and as they grew older the contrast between the two boys continued quite as marked. But still Timothy *did* grow, and Dick—always with him, 'minding' him, although the two were the same age; protecting him in all sorts of real and imaginary dangers; helping him first in and then out of every bit of mischief on foot—got to be as fond of his cousin as of one of his own brothers. For there were plenty more children in the old-fashioned gable cottage, where the squire's gamekeepers had lived for more than fifty years. *Fifty* did I say? The low, quaint building, half brick, half wood, with right along the front a big black beam, over which peered the latticed windows and under which frowned the deep porch, was quite as old as the squire's own house, standing further back from the village street, and in the midst of a pretty park. Father and son had succeeded each other at the cottage for generations back, just as they had done at the House; and Dick looked some day or other to being Squire Mervyn's gamekeeper himself, but just at present he kept to his school, and worked under the gardener on Saturdays, and on most summer evenings as well when school was over.

Two fine girls, and then two more sturdy boys, had made their appearance one after another at the cottage; and Mrs. Harman had enough to do with her own family, people said, without concerning herself so much in her sister's affairs; for, although Tim and his mother nominally lived with Ralph Meadows, most of their time was spent with the Harmans. Ralph was a cross-grained old fellow at best, and, soured by his daughter's disobedient marriage, had few kind words for her, and none at all for her child. To be sure he never thought of grudging their bit and sup, and was never heard to complain of the burden they were to him, although Lucy's health was so bad that her earnings made but little addition to the comforts of the household.

But if mother or son wanted cheerful smiles and kind words they knew they must look for them elsewhere than at home. So at the keeper's lodge, amongst the merry, happy, healthy family, there Tim was almost always to be found; and many a caution did Mrs. Harman give to her own boy, to look well after the other child, to bear with his peevish ways, and whatever the rest of the world did, 'never on no account to be hard on Timothy Brogg.'

Tim was not popular with any one but with his mother and with Dick; he was peevish from the effects of his mother's spoiling, and timid, owing probably to his grandfather's harshness: the worst of the matter being that his cowardice led him often into the sin of lying, while here too the con-

trast between the cousins was maintained: for Dick had never been known to tell a lie in his life.

But to return to the night Dick remembered so well—the night on which his Aunt Lucy died. It was in November; little Jock had been born the spring of that year, and then it was that good Mrs. Harman had been summoned to leave her husband and children, and her place in the old gabled cottage knew her no more. She was missed by many—by none, perhaps, more than by Timothy Brogg and his mother. After her death Dick took up the habit of going down to his aunt, and spending hours there; for things were not as they had been at the game-keeper's. Mrs. Martha, as she was called—Harman's sister, a middle-aged, single woman, had come down from London to keep house for her brother, and look after his motherless children. She had no liking for Dick, at that time a high-spirited, mischievous boy of eight, and there was frequent war between them. Moreover, his Aunt Lucy's health failed more and more; she could rarely leave her father's house, and as she was miserable when her boy was not in sight or within hearing, the two cousins spent their time out of school hours at old Meadows's. Dick liked to talk of his mother, and his aunt liked to hear him: for want of any other companion she liked to talk to the child herself too; and the burden of her talk was, what would become of Tim when she was dead and gone.

'My boy has no friends,' she said; 'father is *that* hard on him as would drive any one to fib;' and, indeed, hardly a week passed that Timothy did not get punished, after being caught out in some mean underhand trick or other. On this particular November evening Dick raced down the lane to old Meadows' house as usual as soon as he had seen his little sister safe home from school—Tim was not with him, his mother had been very ill all day, and had kept him at home,—as he stopped out of breath at the door, sounds of lamentation met his ears from within.

'My!' said little Dick to himself, 'ain't Tim catching it this time!' and in truth Timothy was at that moment undergoing a sound thrashing. Dick was almost afraid to go in, but just then he heard something which frightened him more than Tim's cries had done. He heard his aunt's voice; she was calling out loudly from the room upstairs, calling with mingled sobs and screams to her father, not to kill her poor boy outright. Dick opened the door then, and ran up to her, followed by Tim, released at last from his grandfather's hands. He threw himself weeping into his mother's arms, and she rocked herself to and fro, still crying, and saying over and over again,—

'What will become of him when I am dead and gone?'

Dick stood by half-frightened, half-despising Tim, for making such a fuss over a beating.

'I'll take care of him when you're dead, Aunt Lucy,' said the little boy.

'Will you?' exclaimed his aunt, eagerly; 'you're but a little 'un yourself, yet you're ever so much stronger and bigger. You just promise me, Dick, as you'll stick by Tim all your life.'

'Of course I will,' said Dick; 'mother told me

never to be hard on him. Master Meadows shan't touch him no more!'

'Don't say that,' sobbed his aunt; 'grandfather must take the stick to him when he's a bad boy. But oh, Tim! *why* won't you be good?'

By-and-bye the poor sick woman grew quiet: evening was drawing in; Dick knew it was time to go home, but he felt as if he dared not stir. Tim had fallen asleep with his head on his mother's shoulder; his mother herself seemed sleeping; but all of a sudden she opened her eyes, and looked full at little Dick.

'You mind and be a friend to my Tim,' she said. 'Help him not to be a bad boy, and then he won't get hurt. Be a kind friend to him, Dick.'

Dick answered yes, he would, and wanted to kiss his aunt to say good-bye, but she looked so strangely at him, he thought she must be ill; and creeping timidly downstairs to where old Master Meadows sat by the fire, with his elbows on his knees and his head resting on his hands, Dick touched his arm, and begged him to go up and see what was the matter.

No wonder that, little fellow as he was, Dick never forgot that night; when Meadows went upstairs he found his daughter dead, and Timothy still asleep in her arms.

It was probably owing to the impression which the events of that night made upon his childish mind, as well as to the fainter recollection of his mother's words, that Dick Harman felt himself called upon to be, under all circumstances, the friend of his cousin, Timothy Brogg. For some time this friendship showed itself chiefly in fighting his battles with his school companions, and leading him, out of school hours, into any piece of mischief. For, reckless, daring, full of fun and high spirits, Dick could not withstand any temptation to play what he called a harmless joke. He seemed to think too, that provided he never shirked the consequences, and never told a falsehood, it really did not matter how many tricks he played.

Would Mrs. Martha ever forgive him for setting Leo, the great mastiff, to guard the linen she had collected for her week's washing? The boy knew well that Leo would allow no one to touch it until he or his father himself released him from his trust, and many a smothered burst of laughter interrupted Dick's lessons that morning, as he thought of Aunt Martha's terror, and of all the efforts she must be making to possess herself of her big bundle. It was some time before he forgot the punishment his father inflicted for that piece of mischief; but long before the pain of the thrashing died away from his memory, he could not for the life of him help laughing whenever he recalled the affair.

Poor Mrs. Martha! What a life he led her! He and Tim set her favourite hen, with a brood of chickens, afloat on the duck-pond, and there she found them sailing in an old tub, and it cost Dick a whole afternoon's trouble to bring them safely to land again; for his aunt kept him strictly at it, scolding him all the time. She had no eyes for the boy's good qualities—did not believe in them at all, so much did she suffer by his bad ones.

(To be continued.)

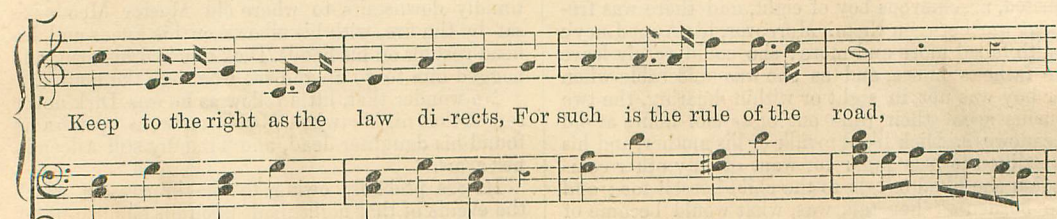
KEEP TO THE RIGHT.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX.'

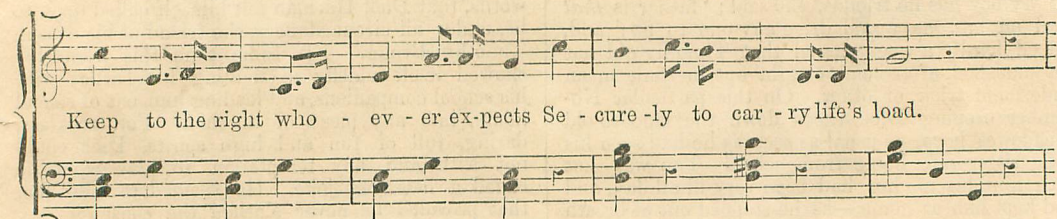
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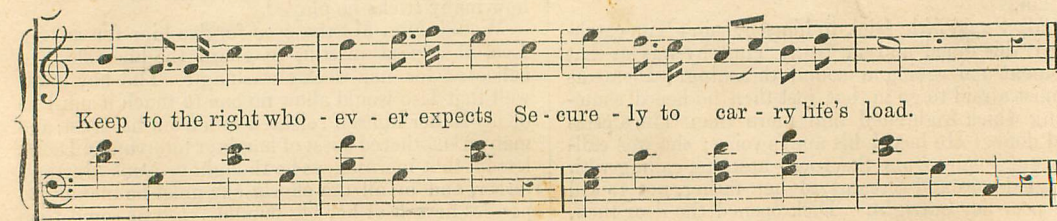
Sym.



Keep to the right as the law di-rects, For such is the rule of the road,



Keep to the right who - ev - er ex-pects Se - cure - ly to car - ry life's load.



Copyright.

KEEP to the right, as the law directs,
For such is the rule of the road:
Keep to the right, whoever expects
Securely to carry life's load.

Keep to the right, with God and His Word,
Nor wander, though folly allure;
Keep to the right, nor ever be turned
From what's holy, and faithful, and pure.

Keep to the right, within and without,
With stranger and kindred and friend;
Keep to the right, and you need have no doubt
That all will be well in the end.

Keep to the right in whatever you do,
Nor claim but your own on the way;
Keep to the right, and hold on to the true,
From the morn to the close of life's day,



THE DEAD REINDEER.

ALONE in his sledge in that wide waste of snow and ice, without a track to guide him, or any signs of the presence of man, the traveller hastens on as fast as his jaded and panting reindeer can be urged by voice or whip. He has been travelling many hours, the arctic winter has set in, and the air is thick and heavy with the coming snow-fall. It is not dark, but a sort of ghastly twilight, wherein all

objects look dim and spectral. The sledge glides noiselessly, and not a sound save the panting of the deer breaks the silence that weighs upon the spirit like a nightmare. There is little variation of colour in the landscape or in its outline; a dreary flat of sombre grey stretching away as far as the eye can reach, with here and there a darker shade or a lighter glimmer like a distant cloud, which tells

where the snow-covered hills break the dead level of the treeless plain. By-and-bye it will be white—all white; the whole face of the landscape will be covered, and all the marks which distinguish one part from another effaced. Woe be to the *traveller then!* if he reaches not a place of shelter before the snow comes he will surely be lost; the north wind will come sweeping over the waste and heap it up into ridges and hills, on one of which he will find a grave. There are no stars visible, for the snow-clouds are like a veil between earth and sky. But they cannot altogether hide those quivering rays that ever and anon shoot up from the northern horizon to the top of the sky, nor the beautiful rosy flush that makes the heavens seem on fire, and even through the clouds give a faint rosy reflection to the dreary earth. This is the *aurora borealis*, or northern lights, which in these latitudes shine with marvellous power and brilliancy.

On goes the traveller in his noiseless sledge, often standing up and looking anxiously ahead for some sign that he has nearly reached the edge of the waste; he can hear in the distance the faint howl of the wolves, which even now may be on his track. Better the dismal silence that is so awful than this fearful sound. The deer, too, hears it, and makes greater efforts to increase its pace: but in vain; it staggers, trips, and falls on the frozen earth, with heaving chest and gasping breath, and limbs that tremble for awhile, and then are still for ever. The traveller steps out of his sledge and gazes upon the poor beast with sorrow and dismay. Alone in that desert land, what will he do now? He is the bearer of despatches from the Russian Government to an outlying colony on the White Sea, and his way lies across the dreariest and most barren part of Lapland!

He stands pondering for awhile, but the howl of the wolves, which has now become clearer and stronger, tells him there is a need for immediate action; so, slinging over his shoulder the bag of despatches, and putting on his skates, he strikes out in the direction which his compass tells him he ought to take, with the faint hope of making his way to some village of the Laps, as the people of that land are called, and to be saved from death in the wilderness, and obtain the necessary help for the prosecution of his journey. Setting his face towards a low range of rocky eminences which lie in the distance, he passes rapidly over the frozen ground, singing this

FAREWELL TO HIS FAITHFUL DEER.

Antlered head, no longer high,
Nimble feet, no longer spurning
Frosty ground, as on we fly;
Where auroral lights are
burning,
Where the grey waste spread-
eth wide,
And the snowy hill shows
whitely,
There thou liest on thy side,
Never more to spring up
lightly
At thy master's well-known
call,
Asking mutely for caresses.
Grieves he sorely at thy fall,
And in heart thy memory
blesses—
Fare thee well!

Soft brown eyes now closed
and dim,
Comely form so full of
beauty,
Strength of muscle and of limb,
Freely spent in cause of duty;
Never more, as north wind fleet,
Wilt thou draw thy grieving
master,
Never more with bounding feet
Speeding faster and yet faster;
Soon the wolves thy form will
tear,
Snapping, snarling, fighting
O'er thee,
Leaving nought but white
bones there.
And I leave thee and deplore
thee—
Fare thee well!

H. G. ADAMS.

A SHOEMAKER'S BILL.

(Concluded from p. 92.)



THE morning of the long-expected day arrived. Already, quite early, there was much stir in the village. The children, who could not wait for the appointed hour, had been tripping about since seven in the morning, dressed in their best, through the village streets. Not till ten was the king to arrive: but the little people had been out of bed since five, and since then

had given their mothers no rest till they were dressed. The schoolmaster, too, was quite ready: his wife looked upon him with secret pride and pleasure, because to-day he appeared so very important in her eyes. The Sunday coat, though it had served him for many a year, still looked very neat and respectable, especially after the seams had been freshly covered with ink. The hat, too, was really quite presentable.

All was arranged, and the master was about to collect the restless flock of children, when his wife reminded him, 'Dear Fritz, don't forget to take the copy of the hymn with you!' With all the troubles and anxieties which filled his head, he certainly would have forgotten it; but now he quickly took the paper out of his desk, and put it into the breast-pocket of his coat. Then he went out of the school-house to the children, who were already standing in rows before it, and greeted him with a loud and merry, 'Good morning, sir!' He arranged the troop, and then the little procession moved slowly forwards out of the village to the high road along which the king was to pass. The schoolmistress, too, was soon ready, and went with the other women of the village to the spot where the ceremony was to take place. The men were already there. Not long after the whole village stood in breathless expectation on the high road.

The schoolmaster next arranged his children, and how they were to stand during the singing of the hymn. Behind the little girls came the women and maidens of the village. On either side the men and lads closed them in. Before them all, in front, stood the schoolmaster with the parish officers. All were dressed in their Sunday best, or in their official uniforms, and the whole had a very pretty appearance. Hour after hour passed slowly away, and yet the king did not come.

Suddenly they heard from the larger village, which was not far off, the report of several loaded cannon. 'He is coming! he is coming!' they all cried. The children were on the tiptoe of excitement, and the master had great difficulty to keep them quiet and in order. At last, the postmaster from the nearest town came with loose reins and foam-covered horse. In the first carriage behind him sat King Frederick William IV. of Prussia. Hats flew off from all heads as the carriage came by. The king saw that here a special greeting, such as he loved, was awaiting him, and he ordered his carriage to halt.

The master gave the sign and the hymn began.

The children sung the beautiful, simple, popular melody, with its plain, hearty words, very well and with spirit. Frederick William IV., who was very fond of singing, listened with pleasure, particularly because the earnest words of the hymn gratified him. Scarcely had it been sung and the threefold cheer burst upon the ear with which the peasants, waving their hats, greeted his majesty, than the king beckoned to the schoolmaster, who, not without fear, but still with tolerable dignity, approached the carriage.

The king said, 'The children have sung charmingly, schoolmaster! And I thank you for this pleasant greeting. But I know neither the hymn nor the melody. Have you a copy of them at hand?'

The schoolmaster made a low bow, put his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat, took out the copy, and handed it to the king. His majesty unfolded the paper, read it through, and a quiet smile passed over his benevolent countenance. Then he inquired, 'Have you held your situation long here?'

'Nearly thirteen years, your majesty,' was the reply.

'Is the post a very good one?' asked the king again.

The schoolmaster named his income. Then the king said,—

'Is that all? and do you live upon it?'

'With my wife and eight children,' said the schoolmaster, somewhat sadly.

A shadow passed over the monarch's face. Then he held out his hand to the schoolmaster, thanked him once more, and the carriage rapidly rolled onwards, in order to make up for the lost time. Frederick William reclined in the corner in silence: he read the hymn and the melody through once more; both pleased him, and showed how excellently endowed the good man was. But the monarch also unfolded another paper. It was the shoemaker's bill, which had got enclosed in the copy of the hymn without the schoolmaster having the least suspicion of it, and thus it came into the king's hand. The noble prince guessed how it was at once, and knew what he would do. At the next station, the adjutant who attended on him received orders to hand over the bill, together with the amount, to the mayor of the little town, with directions to pay it at once and then to send the receipt to the schoolmaster.

On the evening of the following day our schoolmaster was sitting alone with his wife in their home. The children were already in bed and asleep. The moon was shining brightly in through the window, and the schoolmistress, who gladly spared her oil, was knitting by its soft silvery light. Her husband's heart, now that the excitement of the previous day was over, was more heavy and sad than ever. He was meditating how he could summon up courage to tell her what he had promised the shoemaker, and how he could best prepare her for the sale of the cow.

Then came a knock at the house-door.

'Who can it be?' said his wife; adding, 'No neighbour ever comes so late as this.'

'It is I,' replied the voice of the parish officer, who was in the habit of bringing them always the local newspaper.

The schoolmaster opened the door, and the man handed him a letter with the words, 'From the Mayor of N—,' and then went away.

Our schoolmaster returned into the room. 'A letter from the mayor!' he said; 'what can the man want with me?' His wife went out, fetched a lamp, lighted it, and placed it on the table. Her husband broke the seal of the letter, opened it, and exclaimed suddenly, 'Is it possible?'

His wife sprang up quickly and alarmed. Her eyes fell on the shoemaker's bill, under which stood the words, 'Received with thanks. Tobias Werner.' What was this? She could not understand anything about the matter. But her husband first clasped his hands, and, deeply moved, he looked up to Heaven. Then he related to his faithful wife everything that had passed between him and the shoemaker, also the promise which he had given the man to sell his cow and pay his debt out of the price. He related further how he had received the bill with the boots and put it into the breast-pocket of his Sunday coat, which he had on that morning. In the same pocket he had yesterday placed the copy of the hymn. The bill had probably slipped into the thick, stiff, music paper; so he had by mistake handed both to the king. The kind-hearted monarch had ordered the debt to be paid, and now sent him the receipt through the mayor.

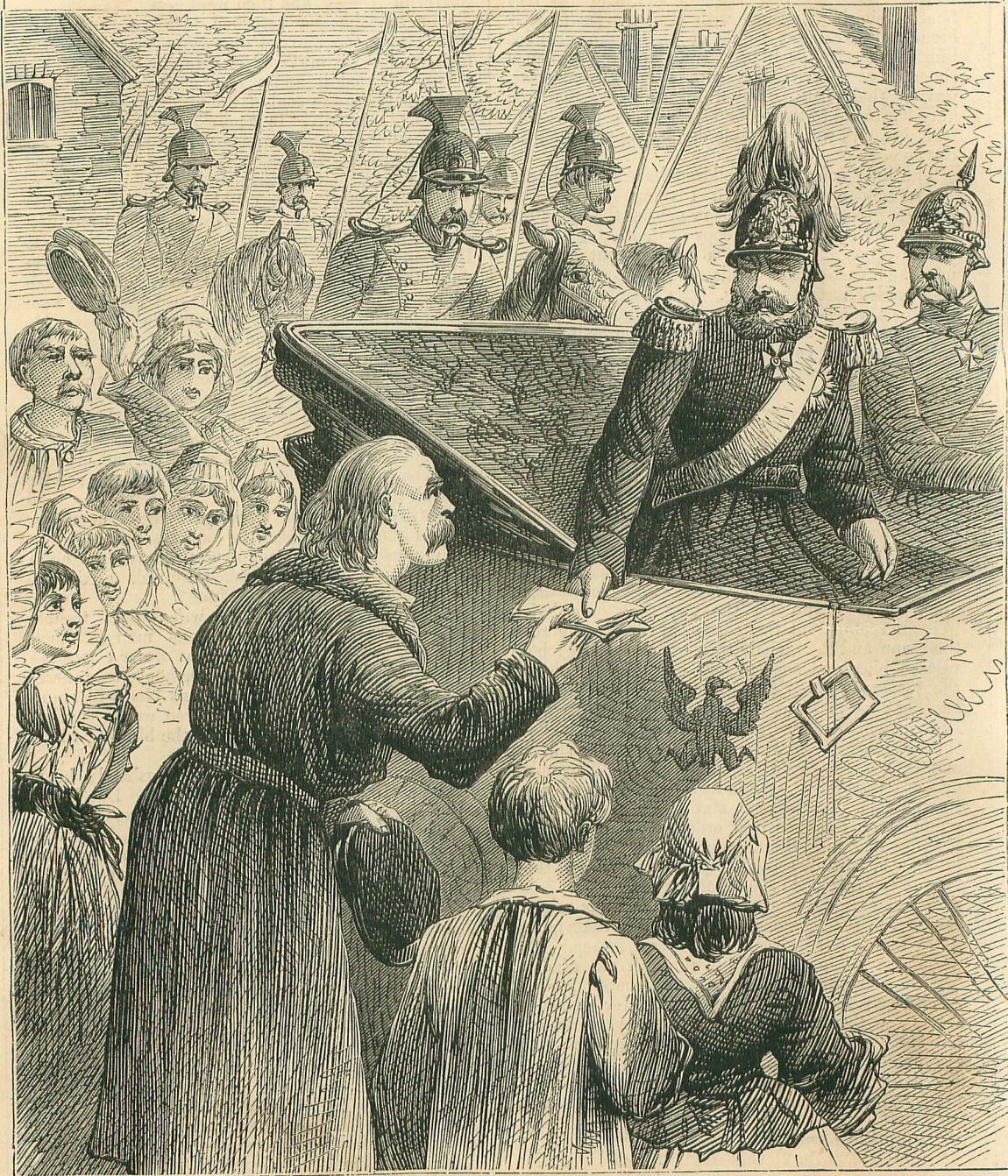
'May God's richest blessings descend upon our beloved king!' exclaimed the happy woman.

Her husband could not express himself as quite so well pleased, for he asked himself anxiously, 'What must the king think of me?'

'Oh, never mind!' said his wife: 'don't trouble yourself about that. Such a great man is much wiser and more far-seeing than one of our class. He knows well enough how the matter happened; therefore he paid the debt, and our Lord God will abundantly bless him for it. Don't you worry yourself any longer about it, but rejoice in the blessing which God has given us!'

Her words took effect, and her husband's heart was now full of deep and grateful joy. But better things still were to come. The noble prince, who loved so much to give help and do kind deeds, had made special inquiries about the schoolmaster, and had received the best testimonials with regard to his diligence and fidelity, as well as to his acquirements. The information which the master had himself given about his income was confirmed. In the same year he received one of the best situations in that part of the country; and besides that, his majesty presented him with an annual salary of fifty thalers from his private purse, which was to be paid him regularly till his youngest child was confirmed. All this had been brought about through God's gracious guidance by the shoemaker's bill. Never have more thankful hearts blessed the noble king, never have more faithful hearts implored the grace of God for him, than those of the schoolmaster and his wife. Their own trust in God was thereby wonderfully strengthened; and since then, in every trouble or perplexity, they have held firmer than ever to their favourite verse of the hymn. 'My soul, remember that our Lord God still lives!'

J. F. C.

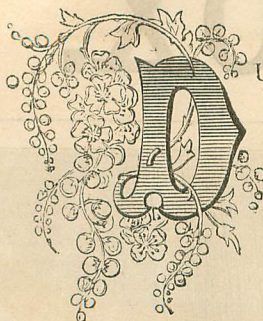


The Schoolmaster handing a copy of the Melody and Hymn to the King.

Chatterbox.



Steering for the Polar Star.



THE POLAR STAR.

From the French.

URING a beautiful summer's night, on one of the great lakes of North America, the master of a boat thought that he might take a few hours' rest, and entrusted the rudder into the hands of his boy, a somewhat simple-minded lad.

'You plainly see that star straight before us, do you not?' he said to him, pointing to the Polar star.

'Yes; plain enough, indeed.'

'Well, you have nothing to do but to keep the boat straight in that direction.'

'I quite understand.'

The captain fell asleep. The boy did the same. The wind changed; the boat turned out of its course more and more, till at last it had made a complete semicircle. The boy awoke; he was astonished to see behind his back the star which just now had been straight before him, but he did not the less continue with a firm hand to steer the boat towards the south, from whence it had first come.

Two hours after the master in his turn awoke. He cast one glance upon the sky, and another upon the boy.

'Well, stupid! what are you doing?'

'I'm still keeping always straight before me, as you told me.'

'Ah, indeed! and the Polar star?'

'Oh, the Polar star! why we have passed that long ago!'

This anecdote comes before our minds when we hear one of those wise people talk who think that they have passed by, that they are beyond, Jesus Christ, and who, in fact, have simply turned their backs upon Him.

J. F. C.

TIMOTHY'S FRIEND.

(Continued from page 99.)



T was when the two boys were eleven years old that Dick began to feel uneasy about his charge. Timothy, weak, cowardly, and easily led, fell into the hands of bad companions, and got thereby into far worse scrapes than any Dick had ever been drawn into. Dick had even reason to suppose that Tim was taken upon one occasion to the public-house,

with a party of wild, bad lads, and that his cousin knew only too well where the schoolmaster's apples and pears had disappeared to. The worst of it was that Tim could not, or would not, see that things of this sort were a bit worse than the many tricks his cousin played. One autumn afternoon, when school was dismissed, he lagged behind with two or three of the worst boys in the parish.

'Come on, Tim,' shouted Dick, 'I've got leave for

you to help me weed this evening up at the Squire's. You'll get threepence. Come on!'

Great cries from the knot of boys of 'Go to his master!' Daren't stay a moment when *he* calls: dare you, Tim?' and the foolish boy, though he wanted the threepence, and did not want the company of those new friends of his, was easily laughed into staying with them and quarrelling with his cousin.

'You'll get into no end of a scrape some day,' said Dick, 'and then you'll wish you'd kept along of me; but go your own way, I don't care.'

'Oh no, Tim!' said one boy, 'go along of Harman, *he's* such a steady chap: never gets into no scrapes, *he* don't.'

'Not he!' exclaimed another; 'and don't lead no one into mischief, neither! I wonder who it was Mrs. Martha meant when she come and told master about some one as turned the vicious ram into the drying-ground, so as he ran at her between the wet sheets and knocked her down? 'It wasn't Dick, of course, and it couldn't have been him as she said was the most mischievous boy in the place.'

Dick turned away, angry with them and with himself, for it was true enough that the character he had gained for every kind of mischief stood greatly in the way of his being of use to his cousin. He puzzled his brains to guess what plot those boys had made, for, from a few words they had let drop, he knew some wrong-doing was on foot.

There was so much to do in the garden that Mr. Jacobs, the gardener, kept Dick at work as long as there was light enough to see by, and by the time he had had his supper it was too late to run down to Ralph Meadows' cottage, or at least so Mrs. Martha thought. Dick could not go to sleep at night for wondering what had become of Tim, and being still awake about eleven o'clock, his quick ears warned him that some one had passed through a little iron gate close to their own. This iron gate opened into a woodland path, leading by a short cut to the squire's garden—the path, in fact, by which Dick was allowed to go and come from his work, although it was not public. Who *could* have business there now? His thoughts flew to the late successful robbery of the schoolmaster's fruit to Tim, and to Tim's bad companions. Hastily slipping on his clothes, he let himself down from the window, dropped on to the top of the porch, as he had done many a time before, when wishing to elude Mrs. Martha's vigilance, and so reached the ground.

The iron gate was open. On through the damp wood ran Dick, to find at last the garden door open also. In the wood it had been dark enough, but here the moonlight showed a group of figures, silently at work filling a large sack with apples, and showed also, as the boy had feared, Tim himself, quaking and trembling over his task. Even in that moment, Dick could not help being amused at his cousin's frightened look. He crept up behind him, and laid his hand suddenly on his shoulder. The cry of the terrified boy brought a new actor on the scene, and speedily scattered the first comers.

Jacobs had not gone to bed. Puzzling over his accounts, he was still up in the gardener's lodge, and startled by the noise, he was on the spot in a few

moments. Tim seemed too frightened to move; the other boys had run off. Dick dragged his cousin into the deep shadow of the open door, and the two waited in breathless silence. The sack upon the ground, the scattered apples, the open gate, all spoke for themselves; it only remained to discover the culprits. Peering hither and thither, muttering and grumbling as he went, the old man paused at last opposite the hiding-place of the boys.

'Ah! I see you!' he exclaimed. 'I've got one of you at last. Out with you, and let me see who it is.'

One! Dick caught at the chance; stepping bravely out into the moonlight he gave Tim a shove, which he trusted he would understand as a hint to keep quiet for the present, and take the first chance of escaping.

'Please, sir, it's me,' said Dick quietly, touching his cap.

'You!' Jacobs for a moment hardly believed his eyes, but soon broke forth into loud reproaches.

'I might have guessed it was you. There's nothing you're not up to; no one you are afraid to play your tricks on, you young rascal! But I'll teach you to be afraid of me. You to turn thief, Dick Harman!'

'I'm no thief,' said Dick stoutly; 'you might know as I wouldn't touch an apple, sir.'

'What are you doing here, then? Tell me that.'

'I'm not doing no harm, I came to try and stop them as was,' and he described to the gardener how he had heard, and then followed the lads.

'A likely story that!' was the indignant reply. 'You think I'm going to believe it, when instead of calling out, or coming straight to me, you go lurking like the thief you are behind the door. Just leave that sack alone,' he continued. 'I'll not have you touch it,' for Dick, not thinking so much of what the old man was saying, as of whether Tim would after all get clear off, began to pull the apples about, and to place them in the sack, hoping to draw off the gardener's attention from the spot where his unfortunate friend was still hiding. He succeeded in his object. Angrily following him, and bidding him leave the fruit alone, Jacobs never saw a figure steal from the dark shadow, creep through the door, and pass rapidly down the path, where the damp grass deadened the sound of footsteps. Relieved from this cause of anxiety, Dick began in good earnest to try and clear his own name; but as he *would* not mention Tim, and *could* not name any of the other boys—for, having been entirely engrossed with his cousin, he really had recognised none of them—the matter ended in his being locked up in the toolshed all night, and had up before Squire Mervyn himself in the morning.

Whatever his gardener might do, the squire at all events gave Dick the benefit of his truthful character. Having heard Jacobs' account he turned to the boy, and asked him a few questions.

'Who were the lads?'

Dick was silent.

'Well, perhaps you can't be expected to say, or did you see them plainly?'

'Not all of them, sir.'

'Why did you hide instead of showing yourself?'

Again Dick was silent, and Jacobs broke out with a storm of angry words.

'Hush!' said the squire. 'Now, Dick, only one more question. Did you come into my garden to steal my fruit?'

'No, sir.'

'Very well, you may go. I believe you, mind, because I never knew you tell a lie, or do a dishonest action. I believe you, but until you explain your reason for hiding, you must not expect other people to take your word.'

In spite of the gardener's remonstrances, Dick was sent home unpunished by his master; but not before Jacobs himself had dismissed him from his evening employment, and forbidden him to set foot in the garden; and as that was a matter in which the old servant had full liberty to please himself, poor Dick knew there was no help for it.

At home he found Mrs. Martha very much of Mr. Jacobs' opinion. A boy, she thought, who could, as Dick had done, put stones in the place of the potatoes she was preparing for dinner, and then laugh at her lamentations over the time they took to boil, was capable of anything—*quite* capable of stealing apples.

'As if the two things were alike,' muttered Dick. 'I *do* play a trick now and then, but as to *stealing*'—and he shrugged his shoulders, as he reached down his cap and started for school.

The story was there before him. Looks were exchanged as he took his place, whispered remarks heard, and the master called Dick up to the desk, and questioned him much as the squire had done. He, too, took his word, and declared his firm conviction of the boy's innocence; but Dick thought it odd that he, too, should conclude by saying—

'You mustn't expect every one to believe you though. You have almost as wide a fame for mischief as for truth, and some people see small difference between faults and follies. I fear you may have some suffering in store for *your* follies, and indeed, Dick, I think this should be a lesson to you to leave them off.'

In the playground Dick found a strange thing: all the *good* boys believed him; all the *bad* boys doubted his word, and were sure he was a thief. Tim held aloof. Dick did not wonder at that; he knew the cowardly little fellow was trembling, for fear his accomplices should betray him; but he *was* surprised to find, when he made an opportunity to exchange a few words, that Tim's chief feeling was rage at the fright Dick had given him, and the consequent risk of detection.

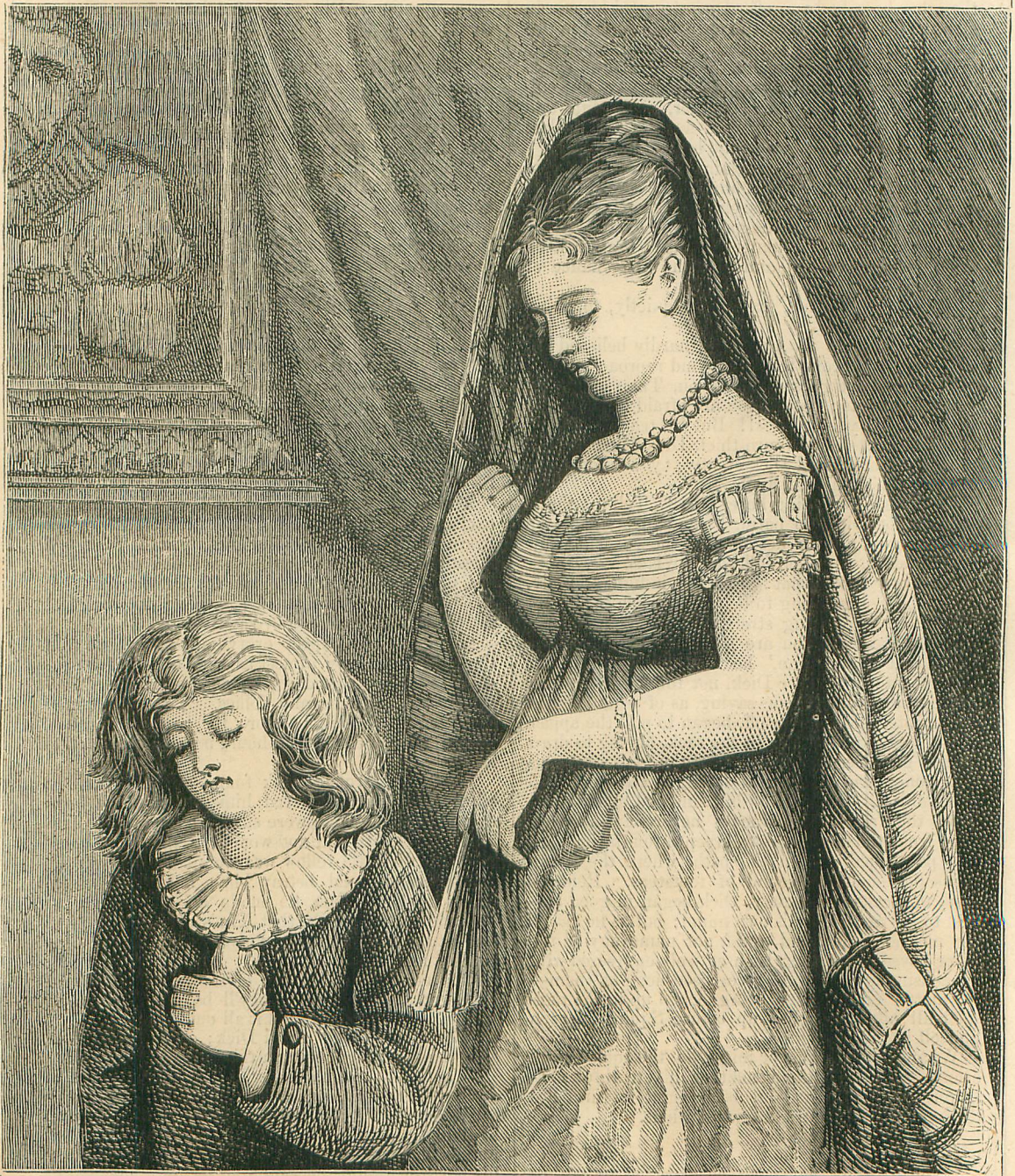
'If you'd only kept out of the way, we should have got clear off; *now* they'll be questioning and worrying till they've found it all out.'

'That's gratitude!' cried Dick; adding seriously, 'I've kept you from being a thief, any way.'

'That's not much. They *say* you're one, and it don't seem to hurt you,' muttered Tim, shuffling off.

Dick walked home dull enough, but was cheered by finding that his father never for an instant doubted him, and did not ask any questions either: it was his boy's own affair he said, and he must manage it his own way, and as for not working under old Jacobs, why it was quite time he began to learn his own business, and he should go out with the ferrets the very next day but one.

(Concluded in our next.)



A DULL CHILD.

THE Duke of Gloucester, third son of the Prince of Wales, father of George III., was a dull child, and his mother used to cause him great distress at times by jeering at him for his dullness, in the pre-

sence of his brothers and sisters; on one occasion she told them to laugh at the fool. The sensitive child held down his head and said nothing; upon which the princess changed her tone, and accused him of sulking.



‘No,’ he said, ‘he was not sulky; he was only thinking.’

‘And pray what are you thinking of?’ inquired the princess, with increasing scorn in her manner.

‘I was thinking,’ said the poor child, ‘how I should feel if I had a son as unhappy as you make me.’

ABOUT GEESE.

A LEGEND.

ARE we so very stupid?’ asked the Gosling of the Goose.

‘Why do you ask so strange a question?’ replied the Goose.

'Because I heard a man calling his boy "a goose," when he came back and had not found what he sent him home for. Are geese, I ask, so very stupid that people should say, "You are a goose," when they mean you want sense?'

The old Goose pondered how she should reply, so as to clear the Goosey-gander family of the charge so often brought against them. After some minutes given to smoothing her white and grey feathers she began, 'Well, it's a long time ago, and some folk say it isn't true; but I believe that part which concerns us is true, though there may be some fables mixed up with it.' The goslings gathered round their mother, and the old Gander stretched out his neck to listen, for he half despised traditions, and was yet proud of them secretly, and the Goose began,—

'Once upon a time there was a city called Rome; and in that city was a high steep rock, and on that rock was a sort of castle, called the Capitol. Do you follow me?'

'Yes, mother,' said the goslings; 'a sort of castle called the Capitol.'

'Well, you need not repeat all I say; but do you understand me?'

'Yes, mother; pray go on.'

'Well, children, there was a lot of wild fellows, like wild geese, you know, called Gauls; and they had a king, named Brennus. Well, these Gauls wished to live at Rome, you see, for there was better grass and water there than at home. So they came—just as if the Kirby geese came and tried to drive us off our own Common.'

'I should like to see them do it!' said the Gander, with a fierce look.

'Well,' continued the Goose, 'the Kirby geese—I mean the Gauls—came, and burnt Rome to ashes. But they could not burn the Capitol, for it was on a great rock out of their reach. Now in the Capitol were a thousand brave men, some dogs, and some geese.'

'Some geese, mother! how strange! Did they want them for food?'

'I don't know, my child, and that has nothing to do with my story. One night, when it was pitch-dark, some of the boldest of the Gauls crept up the cliff. How they managed it I don't know, but they reached the top, and found the sentinel asleep. The dogs, who ought to have heard strange footsteps and given alarm, did not. The foremost Gaul was stepping on the ramparts, and the Capitol was lost—when lo! the geese set up such a cackling, such a hissing, such a flapping and screaming, as never was. The noise aroused the brave Manlius, and he was out of bed in a moment. He clapped on some armour, and darted forth. He just saw the figure of a huge Gaul, and with all his might and main he hurled him over the ramparts on to his comrades below. He fell heavily, and by his weight, and by the surprise and the slippery steepness of the cliff, he carried many others down to the bottom with him, and the rest crept back again in fear and trembling, you may be sure. The drowsy sentinel had his hands tied behind him, and was hung over the battlements and dashed in pieces. And the geese——'

'Yes, mother, and the geese——'

'Well, my children, I never heard how they were rewarded. I hope the Romans, when any man looked particularly wise, used to say, "He looks like a goose." Honour is better than money, my dears. Manlius got half a pound of corn and a quarter of a flask of wine from every man in the garrison. So, you see, he was well rewarded by the 999 warriors; and I hope he remembered the geese who awoke him, if every one else forgot them. But for all that, when a man is stupid he is still called "a goose;" and when a man is a hero he is called "manly;" after Manlius, I suppose. I don't call that fair; but dirt sticks, and I expect our family do often make geese of themselves, though the saving of the Capitol shows what we are capable of. Let us try, my children, to live down the reproach, whether we deserve it or not.'

'We will, mother!' said the goslings, as they waddled back to the pool.

G. S. O.

THE LIFE OF A PIGEON.



THE readers of *Chatterbox* will be interested in the true story of a very human creature in the shape of a pigeon, which lived some years ago in a house on Littlestoke Green, in the parish of Sonning, in Berkshire.

The pigeon's name was Tom. He was brought up by hand, and at a very early

age he had learnt to follow his mistress about the house, and to eat at table with the family. We shall pass over his youthful days. He may have been a somewhat spoilt child, but his affection for his foster-parents never faltered. Though he had many tiffs, and at times would sulk and stay away from home for hours together, and at times would make a little too free with the sugar and other sweets to be quite honest, yet at heart he was always true to his friends.

In the evening he would sit upon the roof of the house, watching for his master's return from work; and when he saw him coming down the lane he would fly to him and perch on his shoulder, or, lighting on the ground in front of him, would escort him home, bowing and cooing with many airs and graces. And when the basket which had held the dinner was put down Tom would take possession of it, and defend it from the attack of the cat or other intruder. At all times he might be depended upon to give the alarm if any one came to the house. But there were occasions on which he was given a more important trust. Once a year a pig was killed, and that was a great day for the bird. He would superintend the business from beginning to end. But it was only after the pig had been duly singed and hung up in the outhouse that his work began. The duty, at first volunteered but afterwards allotted to him by strict order, was 'to mind the pig.' And 'mind' it he did, from morning till night, never leaving the shed for a moment till the meat was cut up

and carried away. Nothing could exceed his fury if any one but the rightful owner came near. Tom much disliked visitors, and could not bear any one either having anything in, or taking anything out of, the house. He never could reconcile himself to the visits of a brother of his master, but would eye him with deep suspicion while he stayed, and when he left there would always be a scuffle over the little bag he carried: the bird objecting strongly to his taking it away, and clinging to it with beak and claws with all his might. On one occasion, when the brother came unexpectedly and wanted dinner, Tom could not control his anger. He flew upon the plate from which the man was eating, and tried to carry the meat off in his claws. Another dislike of his was a boy who lived in an adjoining house. Whether it was prejudice, or whether he had reason to think that the boy did not love him, we will not venture to say. Now and then the boy had to bring a message to the house, and Tom always met him with open defiance. Either he would perch upon the top of the door and threaten him from above, or he would strut out into the middle of the room and look up at him fiercely, as much as to say, 'Come, say what you have to say, and be off with you;' and if the hint was not taken, he would fly at him and peck his clothes.

Tom's chief playmates were the cats. It was always a pleasure to him to plague them. He lived to be nine years old, and during that time he saw many generations, and his treatment of them varied with their dispositions. One rather weak-minded cat had indeed a hard time of it. It is not too much to say that Tom bullied her mercilessly, never letting her have a moment's peace, and often driving her away from her food. At no time would he allow this poor creature to feed off the same plate with him. With others Tom had himself to knock under. There was a large black cat that treated him with scant ceremony. She would catch him in her paws, and roll over and over with him in the dust, and would even put his head into her mouth, and when at length he got a wing loose, and was able to retaliate, she would scamper away, and watch him with amused malice from a distance, smoothing his ruffled feathers. But generally Tom and the cats were on terms of fair equality, eating from the same dish, and in their practical jokes each having his turn. There was always a race, ending sometimes in a fight, for the best place at the fireside, or on the master's knee, or for possession of the empty dinner-basket. The cat had one forbidden delight. Whenever she could manage it, she would slip upstairs and have a nap upon one of the beds. Tom's ambition was to circumvent her. He would often be found standing upon the third step of the stairs, and holding the citadel against the invader; while puss, after trying in vain to dodge him, or to force her way past, would sit down and mew piteously at being baffled. But the chief fun was when the cat had managed to creep up unawares, and was sound asleep. On hearing the cry 'Why, Tom, where's the cat?' she must be in the bedroom: go and fetch her down! he would dart upstairs, and on finding the cat asleep would quietly settle beside her, then drawing himself up, he would deliver with his wings a tremendous box on either

side of her head, and then would drive her, still bewildered and only half-awake, before him to be scolded downstairs.

But Tom also loved at times to steal away, and 'snatch a fearful joy,' by visiting a neighbour's house, where he knew he was not wanted, and where he had been told he was not to go. On summer afternoons, when both doors were open, was his opportunity. But it required all his cunning to succeed. As his mistress sat sewing near the door, he would stray out, and disappear in a casual way round the corner, returning at once. After two or three longer absences, on finding himself, as he thought, unnoticed, he would make his bolt. Going round the corner as before, he would just take one peep back to assure himself that he was not missed, and then would scurry down the bricks for bare life, and make the very most of his time. But if his mistress was too quick for him he would stop short in his run, and return slowly, with an innocent air, as if he had never meant to go at all.

Penitent, however, Tom never was, and no beating that he ever got broke his spirits. If a stick was used to him, he would ruffle up and get as angry as possible, and peck and fight at every blow, and then, if he could, he would fly off and mope on some neighbouring house, until he had recovered his temper. Sometimes, however, when he was in these humours, the stick itself shaken at him from the house-door would bring him to his senses, and home again, but the most unfailing cure was the cat. To see the cat made a pet of, and fondled and played with, was always too much for him, and he would hurry home and make his peace in order to cut her out.

Tom died a natural death, but he had had some narrow escapes. Twice he was shot at, but not touched, and twice his leg was broken, once by being trod upon by accident, and once in a trap. The first fracture seemed so serious that it was thought a hopeless case, and Tom was to be put out of his misery at once. But no one stony-hearted enough to be his executioner could be found, so surgery was tried. Some lucifer matches were converted into splints, and the leg well bandaged with narrow tape, and Tom was laid upon a cushion in front of the fire during the day, and at night by the side of the bed. He was very patient, but for a night or two he moaned nearly all night from pain. He went on well, however, and after a fortnight was able to hop about on one leg; by degrees he got his toes to the ground, and brought the leg into use again; but it was full three months before he could dispense with his bandages. Whilst he was in hospital he perfectly understood what he was required to do, and never attempted to break through the rules; and he was always able to express his own wants, so that whether it was food or drink, or a change of position, or an easing of the splints, his nurse never failed to understand and satisfy him.

We might add many more stories of our friend; but enough has been told, we think, to justify the remark that Tom was a very human creature, and not unworthy of having his memoir in the pages of *Chatterbox*.

H. E. H.



Tom driving Pussy from her food.

Chatterbox.



Expectation.

EXPECTATION.

SOFT raiment made in Tyrian looms,
Crown jewels, or an archduke's rooms
Ablaze with lamps and gilding,
No treat to Grip and Vic afford
Like a dark rat-hole in the board
That floors a worn-out building.

A rat delights the nose canine
Better than pinks, or jessamine,
Or new-blown summer roses;
But why I hate what Vic adores,
The scent of rats and rotten floors,
I leave it to our noses.

The lifted paw, the earnest look,
Speak better than a printed book
Of joy and resolution;
'On Mister Rat there shall be done,
And that before the set of sun,
A righteous execution!'

Sure, Patience on the monument
Could never look for her event
With more absorbed attention;
Sure, Courtier never waited yet
With eye and mind more firmly set
Upon a place or pension.

To watch dame Fortune's golden gate
Which opens ever, soon or late,
With vigour, boys, determine;
Whatever be your special rat,
A waving plume, a Bishop's hat,
Or Judge's wig and ermine.

Work onward, upward, from below,
In action prompt, in patience slow,
Serene, whoever blusters;
Till, standing on the topmost bough,
With triumph written on your brow,
You grasp the sunny clusters!

G. S. O.

TIMOTHY'S FRIEND.

(Concluded from p. 107.)

THE next day but one was a Saturday, but on the Friday, as Dick was going to school, he was met and stopped by Mr. Moore the curate.

'I hear you are in trouble Dick. I should like to help you if I could.'

'Thank you, sir, but I don't mind it.'

'Then you ought to mind it, my boy. Here's a brave, honest fellow, his word doubted, and accused of stealing, all because he has such a name for—'

The curate paused, and Dick, glancing slyly up at him, suggested—

'For larking, sir.'

'Just so,' said Mr. Moore, laughing, but the next instant looking grave again, as he proceeded to give Dick some good advice, which perhaps, under his present circumstances, he was more than usually inclined to listen to. He had some thoughts of persuading Tim to confess his fault to his clergyman.

'What would they do to a boy as *had* stolen, sir?' he asked, when the little lecture was over. 'Would they thrash him, or lock him up?'

'Both, perhaps,' answered Mr. Moore, as he turned away, and Dick gave it up: Tim would never risk either, he knew that.

School over, he felt as if the evening would hang heavily without his usual work, and was pleased to see Tim starting steadily homeward, as if he wished to keep him company.

'Come and have a walk,' he asked. 'I've got nothing to do, you know,' with just a little sigh as he said it.

'Can't come,' said the other gruffly. 'I have got work.'

'Why, where? But I'm glad; Master Meadowes was always at you to be earning something. Wherever have you got work, Tim?'

'Now don't you fly out, Dick, I couldn't help it. It wasn't as I meant to take your place; but Mr. Jacobs can do as he pleases, and he sent for me to go. You won't never tell of me, will you?'

'His place! It was too much. Out came Dick's fist. "You sneak!" he cried, and one blow sent Timothy Brogg sprawling in the ditch, while his friend ran off, and never once looked behind him.

At home he had a great deal to undergo from Mrs. Martha's regrets at his loss of employment, and it certainly was trying to have Tim held up to him as an example. By supper-time Dick was as near feeling sulky as ever he was in his life; but as he sat hacking away at his bread and cheese, kicking the leg of the table, and brooding over his troubles, a remembrance came over him which made him laugh heartily, and when Dick laughed all the house knew it—such merry laughter as it was. He could hardly speak, and the water was in his eyes when his aunt begged to know what it was he found so amusing.

'I was thinking of how scared Tim looked up at the squire's. Like a ghost he did,' said thoughtless Dick, as his mirth died away into chuckles of delight.

'Tim! Tim up at the squire's! When did they have him there?' asked Mrs. Martha quickly. 'What did they want of him? Was it yesterday morning?'

Dick was sorry he spoke. He held his tongue now, but Mrs. Martha was quick-witted; while her nephew was congratulating himself upon her sudden silence, and flattering himself that her interest in the subject had died out, she was putting two and two together in her own mind, and had indeed arrived at a conclusion very near the truth. From time to time she glanced at the boy, wondered at his conduct, began even to admire it; began to see dimly that thoughtless mischief was, after all, a different matter from lying and stealing. She determined to see Dick righted, if, as she shrewdly suspected wrong had been done. True, he had hitherto been no favourite of hers, but then she mourned the loss of his shilling a-week, and had no mind to see any one

put over *her* brother's son. Mrs. Martha took a resolution.

The next day was bright and warm; Dick was all impatience for the ferreting, and tormented his father with fears they should be late, long before it was time to set off; but at last they were on the point of starting, when, to Dick's astonishment, Mrs. Martha made her appearance with her bonnet and shawl on, and desired her nephew to come with her up to the House: he could join his father when she had done with him. Words were of no avail; he had nothing for it but to turn away from the road to the wood, and follow his aunt through the short-cut to the house and garden. In the garden Mrs. Martha told him to wait for her, although Dick reminded her that he had been forbidden to show his face there.

He found Tim hard at work, and Jacobs nowhere in sight.

'Why, Tim,' said Dick, 'how neat you do it! A sight better than I ever did!' which was true by the way. 'I never could keep the edges of the bed straight, Mr. Jacobs used to say. What's the matter?' he went on, for Tim dug away without so much as looking at his cousin. 'Can't you speak to a fellow?' Then, remembering his exploits of the day before, he held out his hand. 'You're never thinking of how I knocked you down! Come, shake hands; forget and forgive, Tim.'

Timothy leant on his spade then, and shook hands willingly enough. 'You won't never tell, will you?' he muttered, glancing round to see if any one was within hearing.

'Tell! It's likely, isn't it?' answered Dick, laughing at the idea. 'But I wish you'd tell yourself, boy, and get it over. I dare say they won't do much to you, just a thwack or two,' and he began to lay about him with a switch he held in his hand, as if to show what Tim had to expect.

'Out of my garden, Dick Harman!' cried Jacobs' angry voice behind them. 'Out with you! I'll not have no thieves here.'

The boy turned indignantly; but when he noticed the old man's flushed face, and saw Tim white and conscience-stricken, shaking for fear, and seeming half his usual size, as if shrunk up with terror, it did strike Master Dick as so altogether ludicrous that the gardener, in the height of his virtuous indignation, should thus be hunting the *honest* boy out of the place, and all the time keeping the real thief, that one of his fits of merriment seized him, and he laughed till his sides ached.

What might have happened next is hard to say, for Jacobs, furious at this ill-timed mirth, advanced stick in hand towards the culprit; but at that moment the window of the breakfast-room, which looked upon the garden, was thrown up, and the squire himself called Dick to approach.

'Doesn't look like a boy with a bad conscience, does he?' said Mr. Mervyn, speaking to some one inside the room, as Dick, chuckling still, and his eyes dancing with fun, came under the window. 'Run round, my lad, and tell them to show you up here,' continued his master.

In the breakfast-room the whole family were assembled; and there also was Mrs. Martha. As soon

as Dick entered the room, young Mr. Mervyn, wishing to put him off his guard, exclaimed,—

'Now then, lad, you can speak out at last; for we know all about it.' But the squire interposed. The boy was too honest, he said, for him to allow him to be cheated into a confession, even for his own good. 'We don't *know* all about it, Dick; but we *guess* that Tim had something to do with it, and that you are in some way trying to screen him. I must ask you if this is so, and desire you to answer me. I never knew you tell a lie.'

'I don't know as ever I did tell one, sir,' said Dick, simply.

'Well; is it as we think?'

Mrs. Mervyn's kind voice made itself heard in the pause that followed.

'We think so,' she said, 'because we all know what you have been to Tim ever since his mother died. You have often before stood between him and punishment. Won't you stand now between him and his worst enemies? his own mean, pitiful faults, Dick? Won't you help him to confess bravely? And don't you see, foolish boy, that by *silence* you do answer the squire? You can't say it was *not* Tim.'

Dick didn't see his way out of it all. He would rather Tim told of himself, he said; 'and perhaps he'd not be so scared if you'd have him in with me, sir, please.'

And thus it was. The two boys stood together before the squire, and Tim listened to such a lecture as he never had heard before, and never all his life forgot. He was not the more likely to forget it that his worst fears were relieved by a free pardon. He left his master's presence that morning really penitent, and for once heartily grateful to his cousin. Strange to say, he was not banished from the garden. At first old Jacobs declined to believe that Dick was no thief; and when Mr. Mervyn forbade him to apply such a word to an innocent boy, he declared that every one knew what a lad Harman's son was for tricks, and they were just as bad; moreover, it would be sheer folly to part with a boy who had such a turn for gardening as Timothy Brogg. So Tim stayed on, bidding fair to make in time a first-rate gardener, and, meanwhile, growing by degrees a better and a braver boy.

As for our friend, Dick, he had had a lesson in the value of a character for steadiness as well as for truth. Without losing his high spirits, or even his love of fun, he began to keep the former under control, and to take care the latter did not lead him into mischief. It was only a year after the events of this story, that Mrs. Martha had so far forgotten her prejudices that she was heard to say, when speaking of it,—

'Our Dick steal! I wouldn't believe he'd steal anything, not if I saw him take it!' which proved that he had contrived to give her a very different opinion of him from the one she entertained at the time, when she had considered that the boy who could put stones into her saucepan was capable of any enormity.

E. G. O'R.





THE SOUP.

I CANNOT eat my soup, there is not enough butter in it,' said little Margaret, pushing her plate away.

'Never mind,' said her mother; 'you shall have some soup that you will like better in the evening.'

The mother then went to the kitchen-garden to dig up potatoes, and told Margaret to gather them up and put them into sacks, so that she was very busy until sunset.

When they went home the mother prepared the supper and brought out the soup. 'This is quite different soup,' said Margaret; 'it tastes much better.' And she soon ate up the platefull.

Her mother laughed and said, 'It is the same that you had in the morning, but it tastes so much better because you have been at work all the afternoon.'

'Who labours for his daily meat
To him the coarsest fare is sweet.'



CLYST BARTON.

CHAPTER I.

SUMMER-TIDE in Devon! Heather-bells crown-
ing the still moors with purple glory. Light
and life clothing the land in green garments from
sea to sea! The old postman had started early from
Drerecombe, for, pleasant as it was in the woods,
where each shadow trembled on the petals of a
flower, higher up in the world of fern and gorse the
noon was burning.

He had letters for Clyst Barton, too, this morning,
and there was always a warm welcome for him in the
glen, where visitors were rare and letters rarer.

So before the morning mists had lifted from the
vale Hunt was far up on the moorland, and as the
tower-clock of Abbotsleigh struck nine he pushed
open the green gate and went up between the rose-
bushes to the wide porch of the farm.

The house was built in a deep green glen, once the
pathway of a river; but long years had passed since

the swift waters had dashed between the rugged hill-sides. Rich pastures marked the windings of its course, and the silence of the glen was only broken by the cradle-song of a tiny stream sparkling down among the boulders, like a bright memory of the vanished river.

Where the current had been broadest the low-browed gabled farm-house rose, its white walls gleaming through the valley. Apple-trees, grey with moss, tossed their dark boughs above the garden hedges. Silver beeches waved far across the straw-littered yard, and swept with restless leaves the meadow and the purple borders of the moorland.

All that is beautiful of vale and hill-side—green field and sunny pathway, rocky height, and upland beautiful with trees, valley-flowers and fragrant moor-blossoms, a running brook, the dim distance of the Dartmoor hills, the song of birds and leaves, and sounds of happy human life—all seemed gathered into the green, narrow glen, with its stern battlements of granite.

Yet there was a shadow here, on the home which the Cliffords had held for two hundred years—the shadow of poverty!

Mary, Mr. Clifford's fair-haired eldest daughter, came across the low entry with eager eyes to meet the postman.

'Letters, Hunt? Come in. A lovely day, isn't it?'

'Fine weather for the crops, Miss Clifford,' said the old man, unclasping his leather bag and giving her two letters.

She glanced at them with the anxious look of one who fears bad news. Telling the servant who was bustling about the big kitchen, where the pans of milk were scalding on the bright stove, and the hearth-fire burnt merrily, to get Hunt some cider, she put on her sun-bonnet and went quickly out through the yard across the orchard. A boy was lying under the trees, singing softly to himself; a little rosy-cheeked child, who had no light in his still violet eyes. He had been born blind! Mary bent over him with a kiss, as he roused at her footsteps and the glad movements of his little dog.

'Where's father, Archie dear?'

'Gone into Brookfield with the haymakers. He wouldn't let me go, though Allie went;' and a petulant look darkened the boy's lovely face.

'Allie was very naughty to leave you. I will send her back. I must go and find father, dear.'

She went on through the orchard to the fragrant pasture where they were making hay.

Mary gave a little sigh as she caught sight of Allie perched on a heap of hay, singing gleefully some wild snatch of song. Her hat was off. The brown hair Mary had so carefully brushed hung now in disorder round the little brown face.

'She is only a child—only ten years old!'

Mary often made this excuse for Allie's wild freaks and antics when they troubled her most sorely, but to-day the letters made her anxious and irritable, and she was beginning a sharp reproof when Mr. Clifford threw down his rake and came to meet his daughter.

'What is it, Mary? Don't worry about Allie, my dear. She'll sober after a bit. You can't put old heads on young shoulders.'

'I didn't come for Allie. Here are two letters, father.'

He stepped back into the shadow of the beeches and opened them. Mary waiting in suspense.

One he read and let it flutter to the ground, the other he turned over and over with restless fingers and a bitter sigh.

'Bad news, Mary,' he said at last to his daughter. 'Nothing but bad luck since your mother died. Sedley wants his money.'

'Can you raise it?' Mary asked.

'I must sell the old place. It must go, Mary. Better to stick together in a strange land than—than do this.' He touched the letter he held in his hand.

'What?' said his daughter, hardly daring to know.

'It's hard,' muttered the farmer, going on with his own thoughts. 'If she had said at once, "I have heard of your troubles; let me help you for the old times' sake;" but to put it in this way, asking me to sell one of my children instead of the farm—'

Mary looked up at him quickly.

Mr. Clifford unfolded the pink, scented sheet, and glanced again over the feeble woman's writing.

'You have heard me speak of an old friend of mine who went to Manchester, and had a large mill-business, or something of the sort. He married one of Drercombe. I knew them both well in the old times. He is dead, and his widow has heard about my trouble, it seems, and now writes to make me an offer. Childless and lonely she says she is, and will help me for the sake of old times and one of my children.'

The farmer sighed bitterly as he handed the letter to his daughter. She read it carefully and said,—

'Mrs. Harold means what she says, father. It's not a thing to be trifled with. We must think over it. Better that one should go than all.'

'But how to choose?' said her father; 'which could be spared?'

Mary's eyes turned towards Allie, racing round the field with the sheep-dog.

'No, no, Mary: not our wildest one. Who would think for her? Besides, she would break her heart parted from home.'

'You know best, father,' said Mary gravely. She was unjust to Allie. Her quiet, steady temper, had no sympathy with the wild nature of her little sister.

'I will go, father,' Mary went on, with hardly a quiver in her voice.

'You, my dear! What are you thinking of? What use would home be without you?'

'There's only Archie besides,' said Mary, with a sigh.

Neither thought of the possibility of losing Archie.

'If I had twenty children it would be the same, Mary. Depend on it we should find some good reason for keeping them all. No; we must sell the place. The Cliffords of Clyst Barton must learn what life is without their home.'

He glanced round him. Each green spot and rugged height were haunted to him by dear memories of home.

Mary turned hopelessly away. She had no words to comfort her father. It seemed worse than giving up life to leave the glen.

Allie had seen her sister, and came bounding across the hay, saying, 'Oh, Mary! Isn't it a lovely day? and isn't the hay sweet?'

'You naughty girl!' her sister returned hastily. 'I found poor little Archie all alone in the orchard!'

Allie's bright face shadowed in a moment.

'I forgot Archie. I am so sorry. I will carry him my strawberries.'

'Forgot! That is it, Allie. You have no thought. You are no help to any one. A selfish, unkind little girl! Unkind even to poor Archie, who cannot see the beautiful summer world!'

'You needn't be so cross, Mary, if I did forget. Mother wasn't cross like you.'

'You were a better girl then. What good are you, Allie? A little chicken is more useful than you. It helps to get its own living. You let everybody else work for you and then say you "forgot" when I ask you to amuse Archie.'

'Don't be angry, Mary. I'll go right away and play with Archie. Don't be cross, dear Mary.'

Mary kissed the child's flushed cheeks.

'Father's in trouble, Allie; we must all try to be good. Run to Archie, like a good little maiden.'

Allie caught up her basket of wild strawberries, and was gone in a moment with flying feet, catching her print dress in a nail sticking out of the little bridge and tearing a long rent. It sobered her again; and a very grave little girl sat down by Archie and prepared the strawberries for him.

'What is the matter, Allie?' asked her brother, missing the merry ring of her voice.

'I am scolding myself Archie. I'm awfully naughty. I'm worse than a bird, and I've torn my dress. Oh, such a tear!'

'You're not naughty, Allie!'

'Oh, but I am! Mary says so, and I feel so. It's butter-making day to-morrow, and Mary will be tired, and I can't help her a bit. I burn the bacon, and make father's collars all brown, and don't put enough elbow-grease into dusting the parlour because I can't help looking at the pictures in the big Bible.'

And Allie gave a great sigh as she counted up her misdeeds.

'You can make butter,' said Archie, cheerfully.

'Yes; but Mary won't believe me, though I made a real pat over at cousin Bell's.'

A silence fell upon the children. Allie broke it by jumping up gleefully.

'I know what to do! To-morrow morning I'll get up—oh, so early!—and I'll make the butter before Mary is down. Don't tell, Archie, and I'll make you a little pat to yourself, with a rose on it. I'll get the keys from Mary's room, and when she comes down she'll find all the butter on the stone. Won't she wonder? She'll think the fairies made it!'

'She'll believe you can make butter then,' said Archie, joyfully. He thought his little sister could succeed in everything.

'Won't she? And now, Archie, come on up to Abbot's Crag; we will sit in the shadow of the boulders, and feel the wind blowing, and I'll tell you what the clouds are doing.'

They went off hand-in-hand, Tiny—a little ball of white fluff with long ears—following them.

(To be continued.)

A FORTUNE MADE BY A WOODEN HAT.



ANY persons upon whom fortune does not smile, or who wish to be rich very quickly, think that now-a-days it is not possible for a simple man to get to the top of the tree, because all occupations are so overstocked, and there are already too many people in the world. That this opinion is a false one, and that the right man can always do something for himself if he has the real stuff in him and perseveres, the following true story proves:—

In the year 1826 a poor journeyman turner, named Muhle, in worn-out shoes, through which his bare toes projected, with a knapsack on his weary back, arrived at a little village not far from Colmar in Alsace. In this village was an engine-factory, in which our workman had come to look for employment. But the poor fellow's ragged, miserable appearance did not tell in his favour, and the master of the factory at once sent him about his business. Our journeyman turned away, and sadly and despondently went out at the door. But he had scarcely placed his hat on his head when from the office within he heard the voice of the master of the factory calling him back. He returned to the factory, and the proprietor asked him—'What, in the name of wonder, is that kind of hat which you wear?'

'It is my own, and turned out of wood!'

'What! a wooden hat? I must examine it a little closer. Where did you buy it?'

'I did not buy it, I made it myself.'

'Indeed! how and where, then?'

'On the turning-lathe.'

'But your hat is oval, and on the turning-lathe things are made round. Some one else must have done that for you, you could not have made that hat.'

'Yes, it is as I say,' replied the poor journeyman. 'I turned the hat myself.'

'And how have you made it? you must be a wonderfully clever fellow to make an oval hat on a turning-lathe.'

'I moved the central point, and then turned as it suited me. As I have to walk long distances and cannot afford to buy an umbrella, I made a hat which would serve me instead.'

The manufacturer was struck, for he saw that poor Muhle had by himself discovered a difficult problem in the art of turning, which in the mechanics of the present day has become of such great importance. He recognised the immense value of the discovery, and at once took the poor fellow into his employ. He soon found out that Muhle was not only a very clever workman and turner, but a real genius too, who only required further instruction and guidance. And so it turned out. Muhle entered the business, in due time he became a partner, and after the manufacturer's death he was sole proprietor. At his death he left a fortune of millions. His wooden hat had been the first cause, and his clever head the cause of his success.

J. F. C.



"What! a wooden hat?"

Chatterbox.



"I have nothing more, indeed," said the old dame to the young gentleman.

THE FOUR HENRIES.

From the French of M. F. Soulié.



ONE evening, when the rain was falling in torrents, an old woman, who was looked upon as a witch in the neighbourhood, and who lived alone in a poor cottage in the forest of St. Germain, heard a knock at her door. She opened it and she saw a horseman, who begged for shelter. The old woman showed him a barn in which to put his horse, and then bade him come in to her hut; by the light of a smoky lamp she saw that this was a gentleman, and young.

The old dame lit up her fire at once, and asked her guest if he would take something to eat. A scrap of cheese and a bit of black bread were brought out of the cupboard.

'I have nothing more, indeed,' said she to the young gentleman. 'This is what rates and taxes leave for me to offer travellers; to say nothing of the peasants round about, who call me a witch in order that they may, with a clean conscience, rob me of the produce of my little bit of field.'

'It is very hard!' said the gentleman; 'and if I become king of France, I shall put down the taxes and have the people taught better.'

'May God grant it!' answered the old woman.

Upon this the gentleman drew near the table to eat; but at that moment another knock at the door stayed him. The old woman answered the summons, and beheld a second gentleman drenched with rain, who asked for shelter. It was at once granted, and the horseman, who entered the cottage, proved to be again a young man, and a gentleman.

'Is it you, Henry?' said the first who had arrived.

'Yes, Henry,' replied the new-comer.

The old woman discovered by their conversation that they were part of a numerous hunting party, led by Charles IX. then king of France, and that the rain had scattered them.

'Old dame,' said the new-comer, 'have you nothing else to give us to eat?'

'Nothing in the world else,' she replied.

'Then,' said he, 'we two must divide this.'

The first Henry pulled a face at these words; but seeing the determined look of the second Henry, he said in a surly tone, 'Let us share it, then!' With the words came the thought, though he dare not express it, 'We had better share it for fear he should take it all!'

They sat down opposite to each other, and just as one of them was about to divide the bit of bread with his dagger, a third knock was heard at the door.

The meeting was singular. It was another gentleman, another Henry. The old woman gazed from one to another in surprise. The first Henry tried to hide the bread and cheese; the second Henry put them back on the table, and laid his sword beside them. The third Henry smiled,

'You will not give me a morsel of your supper, then?' said he. 'Never mind, I can wait.'

'The supper,' said the first comer, 'belongs to him who came first.'

'The supper,' said the second Henry, 'belongs to him who can best defend it.'

The third Henry became red with anger, and said haughtily, 'Perhaps it belongs to him who knows best how to obtain it?'

Scarcely had he uttered the words than the first Henry drew his dagger, the other two their swords.

As they were just coming to blows, a fourth knock at the door was heard: a fourth gentleman, young, and also called Henry, was admitted. At sight of these naked swords he at once drew his, placed himself on the weaker side, and set to work boldly.

The old woman, sadly alarmed, went and hid herself, and the swords went damaging all that came in their way. The lamp was knocked over and put out, and then they fought in the dark. The clashing of swords went on for a while, then it became weaker, and at length ceased altogether.

Thereupon the old woman ventured out of her hiding-place, lit the lamp, and beheld the four young men stretched upon the ground; each with a slight wound. She examined their wounds, and found that fatigue rather than the loss of blood had exhausted them.

They got up one after the other, and each ashamed of what he had been doing began to laugh, saying, 'Come, let us sup together now, and without wrath.' But when they looked for the supper, behold it was on the floor, trampled under foot, and soiled with blood. Meagre as it was, they were sorry. Besides this the cottage was all in disorder, and the old woman sat in a corner fixing her piercing eyes on the four young men.

'What makes you stare thus at us?' inquired the first Henry, whom her fixed look annoyed.

'I see your fates written on your foreheads,' replied the old woman.

The second Henry commanded her sternly to reveal them. The other two insisted, laughing. This was her reply:—

'As you have all four met in this cottage, so you will all four meet with the same fate. As you have trodden under foot and soiled with blood the bread offered to you in hospitality, so you will stain with blood and trample on the power that you might share. As you have upset and ruined this poor cottage, so you will devastate and ruin France. As you have each been wounded in the dark, so you will each perish by treason and a violent death.'

The four cavaliers could not help laughing at these prophecies of the old woman.

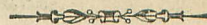
These four gentlemen were four of the leaders in the strife between the Catholics and Huguenots, which ended in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572. Their ends were all tragic.

Henry of Condé, was poisoned at St. Angely by his wife.

Henry of Guise, was assassinated at Blois by the forty-five.

Henry of Valois (Henry the Third), was assassinated at St. Cloud by Jacques Clément.

Henry of Bourbon (Henry the Fourth), was assassinated by Ravallac at Paris.



THE TWO ENEMIES.

SOME thirty years ago, says a French writer, I visited a little town in Picardy, where I was called by affairs of business. Quite close to my hôtel, in a modest-looking house, and on the same floor of it, lived two old men—old soldiers. Every morning they saluted each other, drank some white wine together, took a walk together, played a game of dominoes with each other; all which did not prevent them from quarrelling now and then. Sometimes when they were angry I heard one of them humming the *Marseillaise*, while the other whistled the air of *Vive Henri IV.* This would last for a day or two, and then some good-natured neighbour would persuade them to make it up again. I became interested in them, and longed to know who these two men were. A barber satisfied my curiosity. One was named Perrot, and had belonged to the Vendéan army; the other, Renaud, was an ex-sergeant of the Empire. In 1815, in a combat at Roche Briaret, Perret received from the sergeant a bayonet thrust in his breast, while Renaud in exchange received a large gash in his face from Perret's sword. Both returned to their homes. The Vendéan became a pensioner of the State, the sergeant was paid off with 360 francs.

Chance had brought them together again. But the Vendéan's pension was only temporary. It was stopped in 1830, and the deepest misery became his portion.

One morning Renaud saluted his neighbour with more gaiety than usual. The Vendéan was sad; he refused the offer of the usual glass, because he knew well that for the future he could not return politeness by politeness.

'You are starting early this morning, M. Renaud,' he said.

'Yes, my old "Blanc" * (the nickname given by the sergeant to the Vendéan). 'Yes, I am starting early, because I have no longer myself alone to support; after to-morrow I become a family man.'

'What! You are going to be married? I never heard of such a thing!'

'Ah! And to whom, then, do you think? To whom?' said the old trooper, holding out his hand to his neighbour. 'Why, to you, my old enemy. You have no longer any pension; mine remains to me. We will cut it in two. I have good arms. They will work while your legs remain at home. You will wash and prepare the vegetables, and make the soup. That will not change our opinions at all. We shall dispute just the same; but we shall not die of hunger.'

And so it was settled. The soldier of the Empire earned the bread for the Vendéan; the Vendéan acted as cook and mended the linen. Sometimes their old political prejudices awoke, strong as ever. The two friends disputed and stormed at each other; they called this 'taking their dessert.' But the next day the working soldier would joyfully resume his labour of devotion. J. F. C.

* *Blanc*—white, the Royalist colour; all Vendéans being Royalists.

THE STILE.

SUSAN had promised, long ago,
To go to Lincoln with her beau,
Jim Davidson the shepherd;
Where they would see the talking doll,
The capture of Sebastopol,
The elephant and leopard,

The giantess, the acrobats,
The cage of green and purple cats,
The famous dancing setter,
The fortune-telling looking-glass,
And all the people—but, alas!
Her mistress would not let her.

When Susan, with a curtsy low,
And all her conscious face a-glow,
And all her heart a-flutter,
Asked, 'May I go, ma'am, to the fair?'
Her mistress gave a stony stare,
And pointed to the butter.

That finger said, 'No, you may not.'
'Twas all the answer Susan got.
And all that weary morning
The maid was glum, and answered short,
And nursed the dark vindictive thought,
'I'm sure I'll give her warning!'

But how she thanked her mistress when,
Next morning, at the hour of ten,
The rain came helter-skelter!
Just at the time she would have been
With Jim, upon that muddy green,
Three miles from any shelter!

All day the sky was wet and dim,
All day she sadly mused of Jim,
Admiring, gaping, staring:
But one glad thought produced a smile,
'To-morrow he'll be at the stile,
And in his hand a fairing!'

But as she went that afternoon
To milk the cows, a well-known tune
Came to her, whistled clearly.
No lad could whistle tunes like Jim,
She felt quite sure it must be him—
How came he home so early?

Yes—there, upon the topmost rail,
Sat Jim, prepared to tell his tale,
And very deep in study;
About him hung his well-used frock,
He wore an ancient 'billy-cock.'
His legs were wet and muddy.

He never heard her till she came,
Then started as she breathed his name,
Not half a yard asunder.
'Why, Jim,' said Susan, in her fun,
'Is it because the fair is done
You are so dull, I wonder?'

'The fair is done? Nay, look again,'
Said joking Jim. 'You mean the rain;
It's fair, I'm sure, this minute!'
'Nay, don't be silly, Jim; I mean,
You're moping after what you've seen:
Do tell us what was in it!'



'Well—do you know that Lincoln Fair
Looked very much, I do declare,
Like master's field of clover;
The talking dolls so many sheep,
Sebastopol like yonder heap,
The leopards like our Rover.'

'What nonsense, Jim! how can you jest?
There have you been in Sunday best
Among the lads and dancing;
And though all day a slave I've been,
You'll tell me nothing you have seen—
Have done with your romancing!'

'I've told you nothing, dearest Sue,
But what is strictly fair and true.
I did not go to Lincoln;

And so I've got my golden pound,
Here in my pocket, safe and sound—
A pleasant thing to think on!

Because you had to stay behind
I thought I ought to change my mind,
Though master still was willing;
But when he found I would not stir,
He called me a Philosopher,
And tipped me with a shilling.'

'And you deserve your master's praise,'
Said Susan, with a tender gaze,
As from her Jim she parted;
Reflecting how misfortunes dark,
Cloud-like, sometimes give off a spark
To cheer the weary-hearted.

G. S. O.



"Allie, I am sure; Allie Clifford?"

CLYST BARTON.

(Continued from page 119.)

CHAPTER II.

THE dairy at Clyst Barton was built at the side of the house, with large grated windows on three sides. A stone floor, with a rill of clear water running through the middle, stone shelves, and a stone stand for the shining milk-pans, made it cool in the hottest of summer days.

It was very chilly at three o'clock next morning when Allie made her appearance.

The white wooden butter-tub had been scalded the night before, and was ready for operations. Allie skimmed the cream-pans without any misfortune, and throwing in the whole produce of two days' milk, began with great energy to turn it with her hand. But, alas! though she racked her memory to discover how Mary managed to get out of the thick

yellow solid the mass of cream, her imagination would not give cunning to her right hand.

An hour passed, and poor Allie, flushed and panting, her dress dripping, was still toiling at a thin, watery fluid, that didn't become a bit more like butter in losing its resemblance to cream.

Just as Allie was going to give it up she heard her sister's voice, 'Why, who has been in the dairy?' and before Allie could well take out her hand Mary entered.

'Allie!'

'I couldn't make it. I wanted to surprise you; and—and—the butter won't come,' stammered Allie through her tears.

Mary looked at the little dripping figure and the woe-begone face for a moment, and then began to laugh merrily.

'You foolish atom! Come to bed. Why, the birds are hardly awake yet! The butter wouldn't come, eh? I should think not, with that mite of a hand.'

She took Allie by the hand, ran upstairs with her, and put her in her own warm bed.

'There, go to sleep. I'll dry your things; and don't dare to get up till I call you.'

Despite Mary's good temper, Allie's misery was complete. She was awfully tired, and after a long cry fell asleep to dream that pounds of butter were walking round her in long yellow regiments, with a stamp on them of her own invention. The bright rays of the sunshine awoke her, and she lay idly looking at the waving leaves outside the window, when voices roused her.

'You are going to write then, father?'

'Yes, to-day. Mrs. Harold must adopt somebody else's child. I can't part with one of mine to save the farm.'

Mr. Clifford went downstairs, and Mary came to Allie's bedside with a cup of tea.

'Drink this, and get up, little woman. Archie wants to go some wonderful walk you have discovered.'

Allie sprang up, and pushed the thick brown hair from her face.

'What was father saying about a Mrs. Harold? Does she want one of us children?'

Mary sat down on the bed, glad to talk to some one about it all.

'She has lost her son, and wants a comforter. She and father were children together, and she asks to help him out of his troubles and have one of us.'

Allie put her head back on the pillow, to the great danger of the tea.

'And father, Mary?'

'Father loves us too well to send us away. He would rather sell Clyst. He loves us dearly, Allie.'

'One of us!' said Allie, covering her eyes to shut out the sunshine. 'Archie couldn't go. Nor you. It's me, she means. Would she really make father happy again? Pay that dreadful man who writes such letters?'

'Yes, dear,' said Mary, gravely.

Allie waited a moment, keeping her eyes hidden. The sunlight, the flash of summer leaves, the distance of the purple moor, might have taken away her power of sacrifice.

'If Mrs. Harold will have me—I'll go—Mary.'

Mary didn't answer. A big lump rose in her throat.

'Yes—I'll go,' Allie went on, with tears in her voice. 'She might be kind, and we'll keep Clyst. "We?" and the child's face shadowed piteously. 'Oh! it won't be "we!"'

Mary knelt down by the bed and clasped her in her arms.

'My little sister! we mustn't send you away from us. We shall find a home, if not another Clyst, wherever we go.'

But the glimpse of what it would be to her to go from the dear home made Allie more earnest to save the others the pain.

'You mustn't go away. It would kill Archie. He almost as good as sees here. I have told him the names and the look of all the places so often; and father— Perhaps if I am good she'll let me come and see you sometimes.'

She drew away from Mary's arms, and began to dress hurriedly.

'Tell father. Don't let him write the letter, Mary.'

Mary did not try to alter Allie's resolve. After all, she would have done the same in her place. She went down to her father, who had just opened his desk to write to Mrs. Harold.

'Allie heard what we said just now, father. She wishes to go to Mrs. Harold.'

The farmer dropped his pen. 'Wishes, Mary?'

Mary sat wearily down by the table.

'We had better let her go, father. Mrs. Harold may give her better care than I can, and Allie is right. Archie wouldn't live away from Clyst.'

'I thought the child loved home,' said the farmer, gravely: 'loved it better than all of us.'

'She loves us better,' said Mary, earnestly. 'We must all suffer bitterly somehow; and the very sacrifice will make Allie's trouble lighter. I never understood her so well till to-day.'

'Let it rest,' said Mr. Clifford, hastily, shutting his desk with a sharp click. 'We'll talk it over.'

But it was settled already; they both felt it.

CHAPTER III.

It was Allie's last day at Clyst Barton. It had all been settled with Mrs. Harold. Allie was to travel alone as far as Bristol, where Mrs. Harold would meet her and take her back to Manchester. Mr. Clifford was to keep Clyst.

The child avoided Mary and her father all day. She could not bear their pitying love.

'Come up to the moor, Archie. The clouds are lovely to-day,' she said; and they went together up the rocky path, where the mountain-ash grew among the boulders. Higher up, among the purple heather and the bracken.

'What do you see, Allie?' asked the blind boy, as they sat together on the moor. 'Tell me.'

'The clouds are piled up like great hills of snow over Drerecombe,' she answered. 'Right above, two or three little ones are moving, and underneath their shadows are flying after them. Now one is over High-tor, and it is coming over the green cornfield in the valley. It is just above cousin Bell's now, and the white walls are all dark. It has touched

the grey tower of Abbotsleigh. The ivy look blacks round the windows, while just below the churchyard is so bright. Now it comes over the Rectory and the meadows, and over the brook where the reed-flowers grow. Now it is on father's cornfields; some of the blades are glittering and some quite dull. Now it is just above the wood where we picked the anemones; it has passed on to the glen, and it's on our house, on the rose-bushes; it is coming on the moor, it's on our faces now, Archie, dear. Don't you feel it?

There was something solemn in the shadow drifting over the young faces that stilled their voices. Allie broke into a bitter passion of weeping as the sunshine again shone on her hair.

'Oh, I can't go away! It's too hard!'

And she hid her face in the heather, half-choked with tears.

Archie's little hand felt for hers.

'It was only a little shadow, Allie. Perhaps God will make your going away only a little shadow, too; and there's sure to be sunshine and blue sky at Mrs. Harold's, even if it isn't home.'

The child's words reached farther than he meant them. Sunshine and blue sky! Ah! there's always that if we only look up.

Allie was quieted.

'Let's sing, Archie; sing all the dear hymns mother taught us.'

Softly through the sunshine the children's voices sounded, comforting both of them like a mother's hand upon their heads.

The hymns we learn in childhood have a sweet music other words can never have. They ring through all our lives with the burden of the home of early years, and of that other Home where our mother's voice is singing the songs of the redeemed.

They had a little feast for tea, but no one could eat. Allie could only cling to her father and cry. She fell asleep in his arms at last, and he carried her fondly up to her little room.

'God grant we may be doing right!' he said mournfully to Mary, looking on the little, brown, tear-stained face. 'What would her mother have done? Poor little maiden! She is not fledged enough to go out of the home-nest.'

There was little time for tears next morning. Before the sun rose Allie was driving with her father to the nearest station, nine miles off, to catch the first train.

Allie could hardly remember, in after years, what happened on that day. It seemed like a great blur of sorrow.

Her father took her ticket and bade her good-bye, and there was a great noise, and a scream, and a banging of doors, and Allie was rushing through strange fields, leaving home behind her.

Half-bewildered Allie stood on Bristol platform, trying to remember her directions, when a little, soft, pretty woman, in widow's weeds, came swiftly up to her.

'Allie, I am sure, by your eyes—Allie Clifford?'

'Yes,' said Allie, shyly.

'Poor little girl! Come and have some dinner.

Nearly tired out—eh, my dear?'

Mrs. Harold was like a child—rinsome as one.

Allie in an hour felt more at ease with her than ever she had done with Mary.

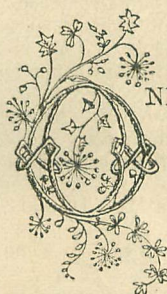
'And bonnie Devon?' asked Mrs. Harold. 'They are as dear to me as to you, Allie—the green hills and the glens! It makes me young again to hear the lilt of your voice, and to know your eyes have looked on home. 'Do you know Drerecombe, Allie? Do you know the mill where the water comes down black from the tors, and every breath is fragrant with the gorse and the heather? There's a mountain-ash by the garden-gate; I have some of its berries still.'

Thus she talked to Allie, while the child tried to eat some of the dinner Mrs. Harold ordered for her in the refreshment-room.

Very soon they started again on their journey to Manchester. How strange and unhomelike everything seemed to Allie! She sat by the window watching the fields fly past, and feeling that every moment took her farther from home. The sun set, and Allie thought of it going down behind the Dartmoor hills in glory—thought of the cows which were coming down the long pastures, and of the hens which someone else would feed—of the flowers shutting their bright eyes to sleep, and the birds singing their evening song—thought most of all of Archie, and her father, and Mary.

She cried herself silently to sleep at last, and slept till the train stopped in a large handsome station, and Mrs. Harold gently woke her from a troubled dream with the news that they were at Manchester.

(To be continued.)



AN

UNWELCOME VISITOR.

NE night about eleven o'clock, a maid-servant in Bishopwearmouth was going upstairs to bed, when suddenly there was a loud ring at the door. Unwillingly descending, she put her light upon the bottom stair, and turning the key and drawing the bolts she faced the midnight air, and was instantly in darkness. A gust of wind had blown out the candle. 'Who's there?' she cried. No answer! The ivy rustled about her ears, and this was the only sound she heard. Half afraid, she tremblingly repeated—'Who's there?' The ivy rustled more noisily, and then was another ring. This was too much. The maid drew back with a shriek. Two feet were placed upon the threshold, and a hideous visage peered into her face through the gloom. Mary fell back upon the stairs, squashing the candle, and giving herself up for a lost woman. Her cries for help brought her mas'er upon the scene with a light, and to his surprise and amazement he found himself and the affrighted Abigail confronted by a donkey. The poor ass, having gone astray (as asses are apt to do), had been tempted to sup upon the ivy that clothed the wall; and in seizing his mouthfuls he had twice got hold of the bell.



An Unwelcome Visitor.

Chatterbox.



Turkey-cock and Ducklings.

REMARKABLE INCIDENT.



HE Rev. H. J. Swale, of Ingfield, has a turkey-cock, the female partner of which was recently set on a number of eggs. Whilst the hen was so engaged, the cock, it appears, chanced to find a nest of fourteen ducks' eggs not far off, on which it forthwith commenced to sit, and whilst the process of incubation was going on it is said to have been a faithful sitter. It succeeded in bringing out four fine ducklings, and the remainder of the eggs were found to be rotten, which may be accounted for by their probable long exposure to the weather before they were found by the turkey.

CLYST BARTON.

(Continued from page 127.)

CHAPTER IV.

A DULL, narrow street; a sky that had no gleam of brightness; a smoky, stifling air. Allie lost all the tender welcome of Mrs. Harold, the brightness of the little parlour, in the blank dreariness of that world without.

The sounds of city life that came through the open window, the noise, the bustle, the clang of busy tongues, seemed to freeze her with vague horror.

Could life be endured here? Could people laugh, and talk, and work, in this prison of stone, roofed in with smoke? Allie could not cry; she sat still, with her wild longing for home so visibly written on her white, pitiful, little face, that Mrs. Harold felt grieved to the heart.

'Poor little birdie!' she said, tenderly taking her up in her arms. 'You want the leaves and the blue sky, Allie? Come to bed and dream about them, and to-morrow there are wonderful things to be seen, things you never dreamed of: and we'll buy a musical box for Archie, and you shall make friends with my little dog; and you'll find out that Manchester has its pleasures, though it isn't Devon.'

With a mother's care Allie was tucked in her little white bed.

'God bless you, my little daughter!' was Mrs. Harold's good-night greeting.

Allie felt she was taken possession of. This was her home, and Clyst was a dream!

A faint exquisite perfume greeted her like a spirit-welcome when she woke next morning. A bunch of delicate flowers lay on her pillow—rare blossoms, with the colour and fragrance of the tropics. Allie bent over them with delighted eyes for a moment; but the tears rained fast upon them. What were all hot-house blooms to one spray of her dear heather?

Mrs. Harold seemed determined Allie should have little time for home-sickness. Every moment brought its pleasure, or what should have been a pleasure, but, to little country Allie, was an infinite pain. The very

pretty dresses seemed like fetters to confine her limbs; everything seemed to quench her glad spirits.

She was quiet enough now. As the days passed on and Allie went about the house like a grave little woman instead of a child, Mrs. Harold began to feel she had made a mistake. Allie had been in Manchester a fortnight when she received a letter from Mary with a few flowers enclosed—flowers from the moor above the farm.

Allie crept away upstairs in the afternoon, while Mrs. Harold was out on some business, to cry over them. The dying country fragrance of the flowers made the child's longing for fresh air, and bluer skies than could be seen from the streets, unbearable. In a wild impulse that took away her thought of what was right, and with no notion of the extent of Manchester, Allie put on her hat and jacket and went out into the street, bent on making her way to some spot outside the town, some green field where a flower might grow and a bird might sing. She went on through square after square till the few familiar things had vanished, and she was lost in the great city.

She stopped at last and looked around her. The summer evening was still bright, but the smoke was clinging closer to the roofs, with a lurid glow on it that stood in the place of sunset.

A woman was standing at the corner of the street selling cherries. Allie overcame her shyness after a long study of her good-tempered face, and asked timidly,—

'Please could you tell me how far it is to the country?'

'Eh—the country?' inquired the woman, not understanding the question.

Allie came a little nearer the stall.

'I want to go where there is grass, and flowers, and birds!' she said eagerly.

'Oh, you mean the Gardens! They're not far. Here, Sue, show this young lady the way to the Gardens. Here, my lass.'

A girl about Allie's age, with no shoes or stockings, who had been staring at Allie's pretty dress with wide-open eyes, came slowly from behind the stall.

'Show this young lady the way,' repeated the fruit-seller; 'and be sharp.'

With another curious stare Sue shuffled off.

Awkward as she looked, the city girl was the first to begin conversation.

'Maybe you are going to meet your friends in the Gardens?'

'Oh, no,' said Allie. 'I only want to see a little bit of grass; and I want some flowers, some wild roses.'

'There aren't any flowers up at the Gardens,' returned the girl, with a short laugh.

'No flowers!' said Allie earnestly. 'They must be there! There always are in gardens.'

'There's none up yonder,' persisted Sue. 'It's only grass and gravel, and a lot of palings. I never saw any flowers there.'

Allie stopped in the middle of the pavement with disappointment written on her wistful face.

'I don't want to go there. I want to go where the flowers are growing. Where is that, Sue?'

'I don't know much about flowers,' returned her new acquaintance. 'There's a pot of mignonette in

old Poll's room, and there's often fuschias and such-like at the greengrocer's.

'Wild flowers, I mean,' was Allie's hasty exclamation. 'Where do they grow, Sue?'

'I never saw them hereabouts,' said Sue. 'What do they look like growing?'

If Allie had heard that Sue could not read or write, had no home or meals to speak of, she would have felt pity, but nothing to the intense sense of sorrow and surprise that filled her heart to hear the child had never seen roses growing.

'Were you never in a real garden, Sue?' she asked, drawing nearer to the girl as they went on.

'I've heard of them. I've enough to do minding old Poll's stall to look for gardens.'

'Were you never in the country?' asked Allie.

The girl's keen eyes looked at her curiously.

'Where the cherries come from, do you mean? It's a rare place, they say. Old Poll's been there.'

'Have you never been there?'

'Never had time. Should be starved to death if I didn't work all day.'

'Never been in the country! never seen the blue sky, or the roses grow, or heard the birds sing! Oh, Sue, I am so sorry!'

'What be the good of fretting, miss? There's plenty of fun here. Mayhap I shouldn't care so much about the country. I'd rather learn to read.'

Allie stopped again, her heart beating fast.

'Sue,' she said earnestly 'do you think there are any more like you?'

Sue began to laugh.

'Why, town's full of them all round here. Heaps of them! There's a lame boy down our court who never saw the sun. He can't get out, and his window's small. We don't think of the country here. Lot of good it would be to fret after it!'

A rush of bitter shame filled Allie's heart at her discontent.

'Sue, here's threepence. I shan't go to the country: I'm going home. You come with me, and I'll tell Mrs. Harold about you and the little lame boy.'

Sue, who knew Manchester as well as Allie knew Clyst Barton, led her home. It was dusk when they reached the dull street, that seemed like a haven of peace to Allie. Lights were flashing from the windows. Mrs. Harold, pale and frightened, ran down at the opening of the door and caught Allie in her arms.

'My darling child!' she exclaimed breathlessly, 'where have you been?'

Allie put her arms tightly round Mrs. Harold's neck.

'I ran away to find the country,' she sobbed. 'And there's none here. Sue went with me, and she never saw flowers grow, and has never seen the country: and there is a lame boy who's never seen the sun! Oh, Mrs. Harold, send Sue to Clyst Barton! She ought not to live any longer without seeing the country.'

Mrs. Harold, making a sign to Sue to wait, carried Allie into the parlour and laid her on the sofa with tender care.

CHAPTER V.

SUE stood in the little hall, staring with round eyes at a stand of hothouse plants when Mrs. Harold came back.

'I should like to help you for my little girl's sake,' she said to Sue. 'What would you like?'

Sue looked at Mrs. Harold with almost a grin.

'I'd like anything almost, mum. I'd like to read. Old Poll would be rare glad of that: and I'd like, begging your pardon, mum, one of those flowers for little Jim—he's lame.'

Mrs. Harold broke off two or three of the finest.

'Come here to-morrow evening,' she said, handing them to Sue, 'and we'll talk about your learning to read.'

Bearing the bright blossoms carefully, Sue departed, and Mrs. Harold went back to Allie.

The tears were all over; there was clear shining after rain in her little face. She climbed up in Mrs. Harold's lap and laid her head down.

Mamma Harold, I think I shall be happy here after all,' she said, 'if I can help Sue and the lame boy who never saw the sun. I think I can see now why people can be happy in a town. They can help people. You can't help flowers much, and wild flowers don't want help at all—they just grow.'

'People are happy anywhere who have the best sort of sunshine,' said Mrs. Harold.

'What sort?'

'Heart-sunshine, my dear. Haven't you seen a little spring bubbling up among the stones, always bright, and pure, and clear, no matter what the sky is above? And people who have heart-sunshine are the same.'

Allie looked up in Mrs. Harold's eyes with a little smile. 'You have heart-sunshine, Mamma Harold.'

'And home-sunshine, too, when my little girl is good and happy. Poor little woman! Is your longing so great for the country and home?'

Allie kept her face hidden, and could not trust her voice to answer.

Mrs. Harold held the little form closer in her tender arms.

'Allie, my dear, you shall go back. I will give you again to Clyst and home. Look up, dear, and smile. You shall soon see all you love so well.'

But Allie clung close to Mrs. Harold.

'Will you come?' she whispered under her breath.

'I can't, dear. My work and home are here. I loved the country—our beautiful Devon, Allie—once as well as you; but God has given me my home here, and bids me stay. I can understand you, Allie. I know what it is to long and pine for the fresh breath of the moor, and the flowers, and the brown hills. Don't cry so, dear; you shall soon see it all.'

'It isn't that,' said Allie. 'I want to go—I want to see Archie, and father, and Mary, and Clyst, and all; but I'd rather stay and be sunshine to you. They have plenty of sunshine at Clyst. Let me stay, Mamma Harold, and I'll try and be good.'

'We will think over it for a few weeks,' said Mrs. Harold, after a long pause. 'Manchester is not quite so bad as you think, Allie. You are like a flower that has just been transplanted. It always droops at first, you know.'

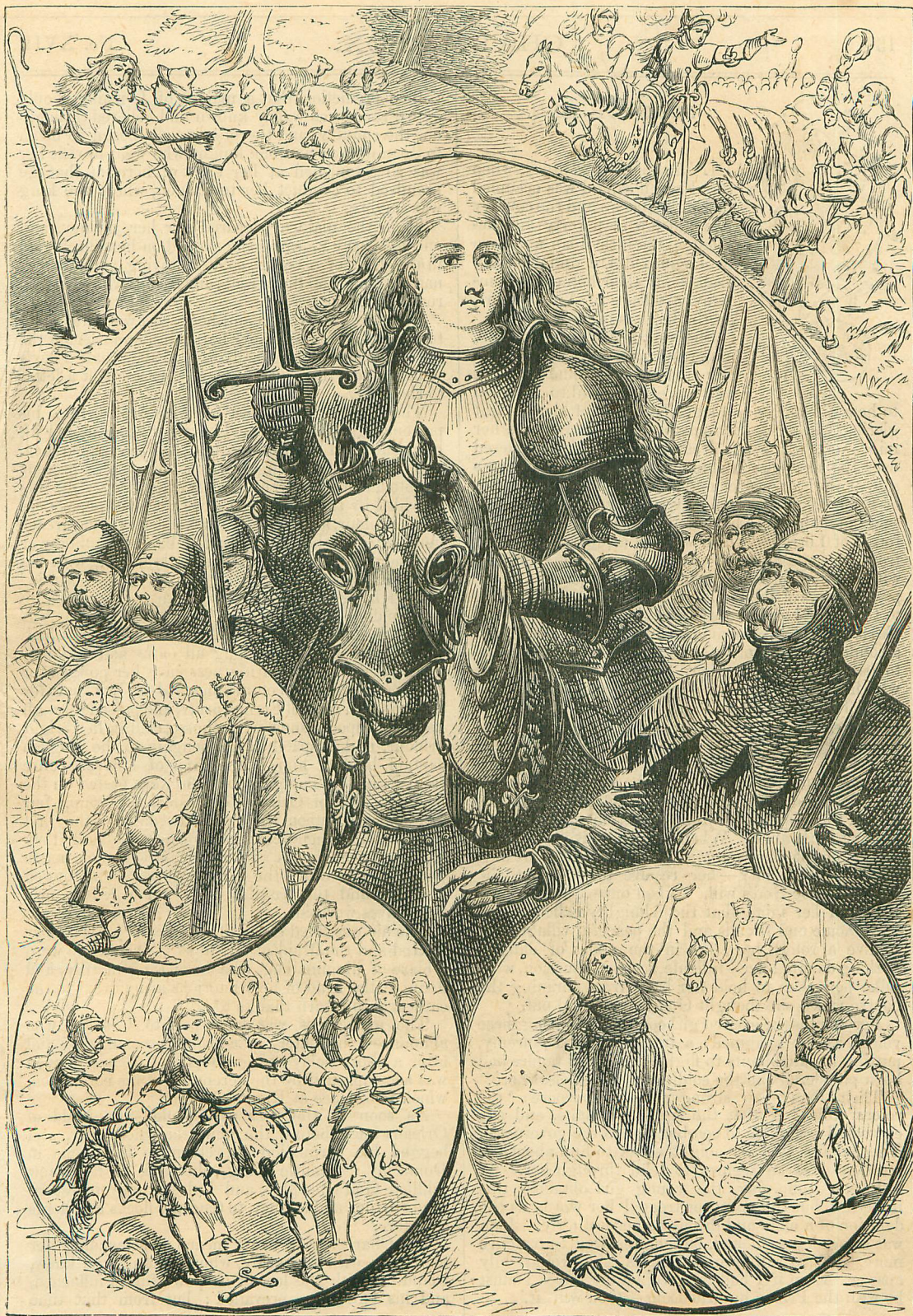
'I hate Manchester,' was Allie's earnest reply. 'but I love you, dear Mamma Harold.'

(Concluded in our next.)



THE CHILD'S THE FATHER TO THE MAN.

"A little model the father wrought,
Which should be to the perfect plan
What the child is to the man."—LONGFELLOW.



Joan of Arc.

JOAN OF ARC.



EARLY in the 15th century, when the French capital was occupied by English troops and the country was laid low in poverty and desolation, the little Joan was born to Jacques d'Arc and his wife Isabelle, in their home at Domremy, a village of Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine.

She was a fine healthy child, and grew up as good as she was fair to look on, and nothing was more delightful to her than

to hear old stories and legends telling of the ancient glories of France. But one thought was always in her mind—one which she dreamed over as she wandered over the meadows in summer, or sat by her mother's side at work on winter nights—and that thought was of France, her now unhappy country, which tradition said should be saved by a maiden of Lorraine, the deep forest of Lorraine, which was but a few miles distant from her cottage home. Joan was a strange girl, and with constant brooding over the old prophecy and the present news of the terrible state of France, she began to think she heard voices from Heaven. One day, in playing with her companions in the meadow, she heard a sound like her mother's voice, and she started home to ask why she needed her. 'I did not call you, child; why have you left your sheep?' said Isabelle; and when Joan declared that she had heard a voice, the mother bade her return to the field until the usual hour for coming home. The girl obeyed, but it still seemed to her that she heard a voice in the air, and she pondered over it until she was quite excited. Gradually Joan became firmly persuaded that she was indeed the maiden of whom tradition spoke as the saviour of France. Whatever we may think as to the history of this young girl, there is one point in it which is all beauty—her resolve to do what she believed to be God's will. When once the belief was rooted in her mind that the Almighty called her to leave home and friends and the peaceful village, and to live a rough hard life in the midst of danger, nothing daunted her—ridicule, scorn, persuasion, were alike powerless to hold her back from pursuing the course which she thought God had pointed out.

For months the excited girl continued hearing these voices, as she imagined; a troop entered Domremy, putting its inhabitants to flight, until their homes had been plundered and the soldiers marched elsewhere.

Then Joan grew stronger in her purpose: 'the voices' told her that the time had come, and she entreated her uncle to conduct her to the governor of Vaucouleurs, that she might speak to him about the message Heaven seemed to send through her. At last, one June day, the young girl obtained this interview, but the governor treated her words as the delusion of a child and dismissed her jestingly. Joan was somewhat saddened, but she resolved to try once more, and to all remonstrances she would only answer, 'Even if I had to travel on my knees I must be with the Prince by Mid-Lent—God wills it.'

The prediction that a maiden of Lorraine should save France was widely known and believed throughout the country, and therefore people began to listen to Joan d'Arc: and one knight who went to visit her was so astonished at her spirit of heroism, that he promised to conduct her to Chinon, where the king was staying.

Then the maiden prepared for her journey, and one February morning she started on horseback clad in the dress of a young soldier, waving adieu to her native village and the parents and friends who clustered round her.

For eleven days Joan and her escort were travelling to Chinon, suffering many hardships, and then on the 6th of March they reached a village about half a day's journey from the court, from whence she sent a letter to the king.

Three days after Joan was conducted into his presence, and Charles asked her what she wanted with him, and then she told her tale and proclaimed herself Heaven's messenger. Some who were present doubted, some believed her, but after a delay she was provided by the king's order with a suit of spotless white armour, and a coal-black horse was set apart for her use; and thus, with her fair hair streaming over her shoulders, and her banner, embroidered with the emblem of France and the words 'Jésus—Maria,' carried by a page before her, Joan appeared before the soldiers of France. Their enthusiasm was immense, and they willingly obeyed the rules which she insisted on, of banishing all oaths and bad language, and thus her earnestness gave her power over the hearts of her countrymen. Joan set out for Orleans with a small French army, and passed through its streets upon a snow-white horse, clad in her bright armour, and despatched messengers to the English captain, bidding him, in the name of Heaven, retire from France. The garrison, who were posted on the northern side of Orleans, quailed as the young fair girl appeared upon the ramparts, and in the first engagement their courage gave way, and they suffered great losses. Another attack was made upon them, in which the French fought with renewed courage, and the English were compelled to own themselves worsted.

The air was filled then with shouts of joy—'Glory to God and the Maid of Orleans!' The streets were a blaze of illuminations, the bells rang merrily, and Joan, at the head of her victorious army, went to the cathedral to return thanks to God.

The glad news was conveyed to Charles, who announced the victory in a public proclamation, and after a short delay the great end of Joan's mission was accomplished by the ceremony of his coronation, which took place at Rheims.

As soon as the rites were ended the Maid of Orleans knelt before the newly-crowned king, and begged his permission to return to her home in Domremy. 'Gentle King,' she said, 'I have now fulfilled God's purpose, and I desire only to return to my father and mother, to tend my flocks and herds as before.'

But Charles tried every means of persuading her to remain with the army, whose courage, he knew, would fail with the loss of so powerful an influence, and his entreaties prevailed; but from that time

Joan lost her faith in her mission, which she felt had been accomplished, and she no longer had confidence that she was directly inspired by God.

During the march of the French army towards Paris the Maid's sword broke in two, and that she looked upon as an evil omen; and her spirits seemed to fail her in the first assault made upon the English army, and their attack proved a failure.

Joan regarded this as a certain warning from above that her work was ended, and she again determined to retire from the wars; but once more her resolve was shaken by the entreaties of the soldiers.

At length, in an engagement in which she had shown greater valour than ever, although obliged to retreat, her enemies closed around her and dragged her from her horse, making her their captive.

The heroic girl was transferred to several prisons, from which she twice attempted to escape; she was treated cruelly and violently, and at last condemned to death. To this day every Englishman feels shame for those men, of our own race and name, whose cruelty to the conquered Maid of Orleans is a blot upon the annals of our country. She was loaded with chains; she was submitted day after day to the questioning of doctors, bishops, and judges, who were resolved to condemn her, and at length, under a charge of heresy and witchcraft, they burned her alive in the market-place of Rouen.

Poor Joan of Arc! only in her twentieth year! She was young to die so cruel a death! She had been pure and gentle, she had been loyal and true to her king and country, and whatever may have been her mistakes, she stands before us as a bright example of faith and earnestness such as cannot be surpassed. It was God in Whom she trusted, God Whom she thought she was obeying, and when He called she was ready to dare and do all things. What a lesson for girls of our own day! What beautiful purposes would be accomplished by them did they but take as a motto the words which the poet has put into the mouth of Joan d'Arc:—

'Whither *He* shall send me I must go;
And whatso *He* commands me I must speak;
And whatso is *His* will that I must do;
And I must put away all fear of man,
Lest *He* in wrath confound me.'

M. F. S.

LETTER PUZZLES.

1.

Reptiles transposed.

1. N, P, T, O, H, Y.
2. L, N, E, O, M, E, A, H, C.
3. L, G, R, I, L, O, A, T, A.
4. L, T, K, S, E, N, A, R, A, T, E.

2.

Two Ts, one S, and one B.

What very large bird can you make of me?

3.

One T, B, F, L, S, A, and one E.

What town in Ireland can you make of me?

Answers in our next Number.

'THEY SAY!'

'THEY say!'—ah, well, suppose they do!

But can they prove the story true?

Why count yourself among the 'they'?

Who whisper what they dare not say?

Suspicion may arise from nought

But malice, envy, want of thought.

'They say!'—but why the tale rehearse,
And help to make the matter worse?

No good can possibly accrue

From telling what may be untrue;

And is it not a nobler plan

To speak of all the best you can?

'They say!'—well, if it should be so,

Why need you tell the tale of woe?

Will it the bitter wrong redress,

Or make one pang of sorrow less?

Will it the erring one restore,

Henceforth to 'go and sin no more'?

'They say!'—Oh, pause and look within?

See how thine heart inclines to sin;

And lest in dark temptation's hour

Thou, too, shouldst sink beneath its power,

Pity the frail, weep o'er their fall,

But speak of good, or not at all.



SAMBO'S MISTAKE.

ANY years ago, before slavery was abolished, a little black boy was taken from his home on the sultry African coasts, and brought to England. He may have been kindly treated by his captors, who possibly were no more harsh to him than they would have been to a young calf or colt that they were bringing from one place to another; but little Sambo was something more than a dumb animal, and he fretted for his home and his family. The first English town he reached was Liverpool, and here he was taken to the house of the lady who was to be his mistress. In those days most ladies of any rank and station had their black page standing behind their chairs, ready to run their errands, and hold their cup of tea or chocolate.

This was to be Sambo's work, and he was summoned into the beautiful drawing-room to see his mistress. The gay hangings and the strange furniture dazzled his eyes for a moment, but then, with a cry of 'My brother! my brother!' he rushed wildly at a splendid pier-glass in the room, smashing it into a thousand pieces. He had never seen anything of the sort before, and thought that the reflection of his own black self was the little brother in Africa coming to meet him. We may well hope that poor Sambo was not punished for this very natural mistake; but that, touched by his affection for his family, his mistress would treat him kindly, and make him love her too.

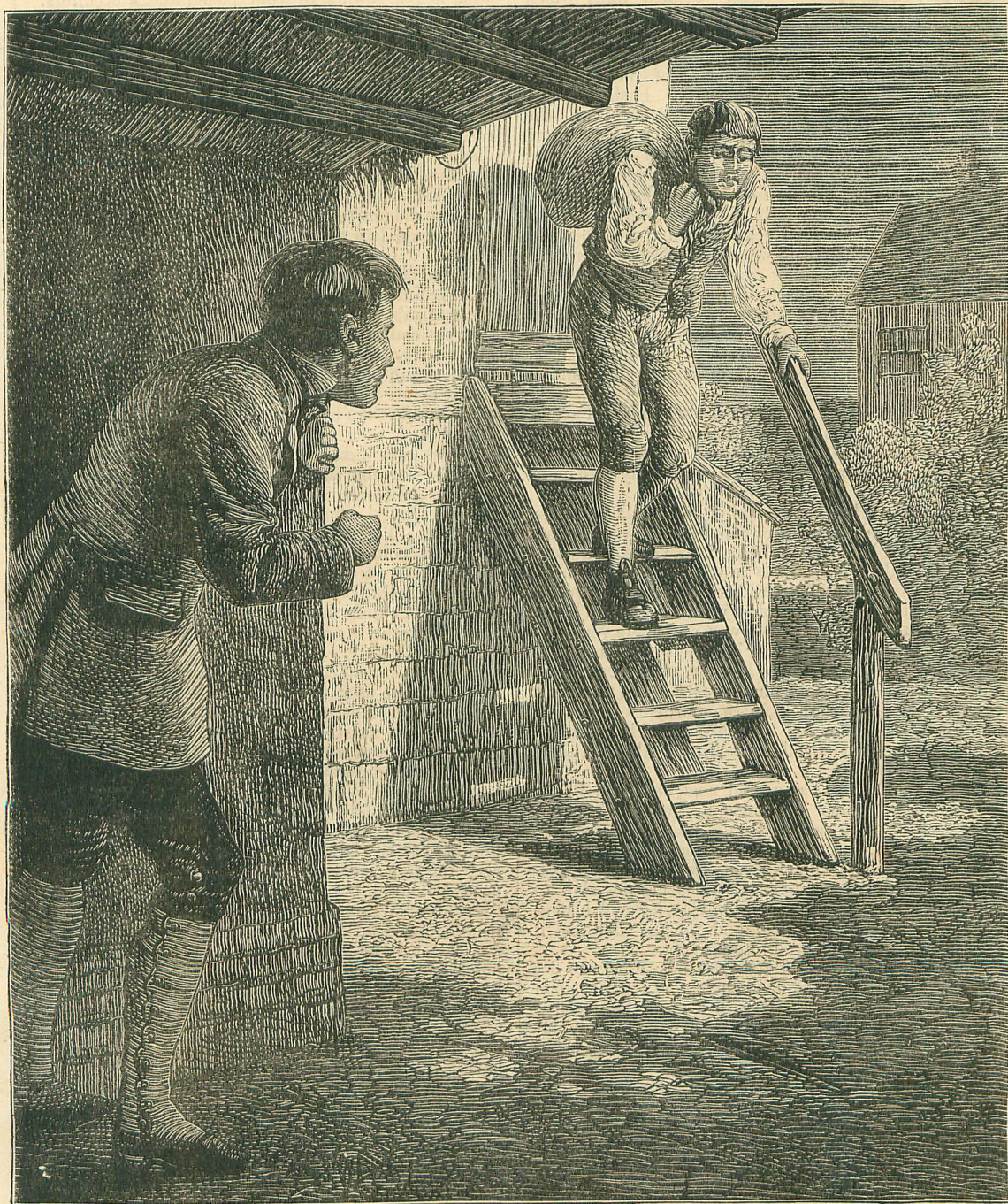
H. A. F.



Sambo's Mistake.

Cases for Binding the Volume, 1s. each.

Chatterbox.



The man descended the steps with a good load on his back.

THE CHANGED LETTER.

By Geo. S. Outram, Rector of Redmole.



HE village of Redesdale lies in an open grass plain in one of the Midland shires. Some richly wooded hills, which break the roughness of the east winds, are crowned with a gem of a palace, the ancestral home of the Earls of Blackwater. Fashioned like its feudal predecessors, the great house shows turret and bastion, and a semicircular

terrace below the massive west tower is defended by a dozen cannon, useless now except when the arrival of a royal prince unlocks their silent tongues. Then, indeed, the greenwood echoes with the sound, and the boys at Redesdale watch the flashes (for it is usually a winter evening when such occasions arise), and count the seconds until the report agitates the air and makes the windows rattle. Redesdale is a pleasant village, inconvenient in being so far from towns, and miry in bad weather; but it has been uplifted of late by rumours of a new line and a station.

One of the chief persons in Redesdale was Farmer Black. If he was not the Guardian, he was sure to be the Churchwarden; if he was neither one or the other, then he was consoled by being Waywarden or Overseer.

John Black had a quiverful of children, of all ages, from twenty downwards or from three upwards; and, besides, he had adopted Charley Yates, his dead sister's child. Black was a very industrious man, and careful about his children's morals and opportunities, but he was not blest with a very open heart. I fear little Charley Yates was not made very welcome. His uncle took him in because he was penniless and motherless, and a blood relation, but he did not eye the lad with abounding pity. He thought it hard that he should have the burden. He often blamed his sister for marrying that hair-brained fellow Yates, who drank himself to death and ruin in a year or two.

She would have Yates, and now he, John Black, had to pay for her wilfulness by housing her boy. So used Black to ponder things, until he almost disliked the boy, and treated him more as a bondsman than a kinsman. The children saw this, and did likewise. With the petty tyranny they are not slow to exhibit, they made their cousin Charley feel his inferiority and dependence, and the lad did feel it keenly—the iron entered into his soul.

Of course Farmer Black was not going to let Charley eat the bread of idleness, and there is good reason to believe that he rather more than earned his food and raiment. He was a quick, handy, industrious lad. None of John Black's children could 'frame' better than Charley at any sort of farm-work; and this, which in a child of his own would have excited his admiration, rather increased his coldness toward his nephew. When John was reading the columns of that astonishing Saturday paper, the *Granton Chronicle*, and came to grief at some long

word or out-of-the-way phrase, or got hopelessly lost in the wilds of Geography, ten to one Charley could throw a gleam on the dark place, for his dear mother had spent her last energies on her boy's mind.

'Charles,' she used to say, 'I have nothing to leave you. I doubt whether all I have will more than pay what is still owing to your poor father's creditors. They have dealt kindly with the widow, and she must be just to them. They shall have the uttermost farthing, and you, my boy, must go forth alone, and fight the battle. Work away, Charley, and sing over that rule of three. You'll be a great man yet.'

So Charley worked away at book and slate, and rose to the top of the village school before his mother died.

'Mrs. Yates, you should make a bank clerk of your lad,' said Mr. Turnaby more than once; but Charley did not relish the idea.

'I should like to be a farmer, like Uncle Black,' he said. 'I should like to ride along the lanes, and hear the blackbird whistle.'

Mrs. Yates tried to explain to Charley, that to be a comfortable farmer you must have more money than she could leave him; but Charley only answered her by repeating his desire to ride about after his business and hear the birds sing.

But before anything was settled, Mrs. Yates, long ailing and broken by trouble, died after a few weeks' illness, and then all her thoughts perished. Her boy was now taken at his word, and a farmer he became—farming in some shape or other was in his head or hands morning, noon, and night, Sunday and week-day. Charley had not much riding about the lanes; Taffy, the pony, was galloped nearly to death by Tom and Jack, the elder lads; Charley's ridings were confined to straddling across the very broad backs of Beauty and Blossom, nor did it extend further than the pond in the home-field, or the gate where the weary animals saw the promised land of rest and plenty. Charley certainly had his wish, but it was very different to his expectations. Somehow, when he used to look at smart Phil Nash, who rode after hounds on a good horse, he thought a farmer's life must be vastly pleasant. But Uncle Black was not of the Nash order. Plain, frugal, laborious, he had no time for pleasure, nor did he relish it in his sons. Work was the household word of the Blacks, and Charley found his share of it not so pleasant as his old employments at the school, though he did hear the lark among the corn. He was not very far removed from Dan Sharp, the moonfaced, peony-coloured boy, who slept next to Charley in the cobwebby garrets. He and Dan were great friends, but Dan had the advantage. As tough as a cricket-ball, no raw fog could get into his throat, no east wind could give him a cold; he could work bareheaded under the fiery sun, as if he were a salamander, and chop icy turnips in February long after Charley's bitter fingers were in his trowsers pockets.

Mrs. Black was often hard upon her husband for having introduced Charley into the family—'As if you hadn't enough children of your own! And why shouldn't Yates' folks look after the child, as well or better than you? He's no Black—he's a Yates, every inch of him. But it's like you, John—too soft for this deceitful world.'

By this bit of bye-talk it may be seen our hero had no warm friend in Mrs. Black; his only friends, in fact, were his cousin Jessie, Dan the boy, and Mary Still, a servant in whom Mrs. Black placed almost unlimited confidence, and by whom Charley was generally treated with much kindness.

CHAPTER II.

JOHN BLACK had found Matthew Prince out. Prince was his much-trusted foreman. Prince kept the key of the corn-chamber, and was a much-trusted minister of affairs. And not without reason. Had they not birdnested together as lads? Had they not been fellow-tormentors of old Mother Britton? Were they not married the same day? And, after all these years of friendship, to have suspicions that Matthew was a rogue, and to take from him the key of the corn-chamber, hurt John more than he thought anything could have done.

John was sure there was cheating somewhere. Besides, ugly whispers were of late busy about Matthew's good name. He had beaten his wife—and some one, very like him, was seen reeling and rolling along the lane in the direction of his home; and people began to complain that he would not pay. Moreover, John Black had on one occasion caught Matthew and Mary Still engaged in a long and deep conversation in the stackyard. They did not see him, but he saw them, and he felt sure, painfully sure, they were not engaged on his business—they were evidently wrapped up in matters of their own. If Matthew had become unsteady, if the corn did not last nearly so long as it ought, the key of the loft must have another keeper. But he would find out more before he acted thus summarily. He had not watched many evenings under a shed near the chamber steps when he heard feet stealthily ascending. The door was silently opened, and some one went inside. John's first impulse was to dart up the stairs, and collar the thief in the act. But the old friendship tied his hands, and he resolved to keep still. Soon the man came out, locked the door, and descended the steps with a good load on his back. John let him depart unmolested, and then returned full of grief, and anger, and perplexity, to his sleepless pillow. Matthew was, in fact, a rogue, and the key must be in his hands no longer. But how to get it from him without letting him know he was discovered? And how to watch over other farm produce, which was at Matthew's mercy?

John revolved all these things in his mind, and he saw no safe course but the dismissal of Matthew, and that would be his ruin. The plan he finally resolved on was to get possession of the key at once, and to be more strict over Matthew in future; but it was all very disquieting and very distressing. John Black was a determined, straightforward man, and declared to himself that his children should not be defrauded. Had he been alone in the world he would perhaps have put up with the loss, but when he looked on the faces of his burns he felt the cruelty of Matthew's dishonest ways, and vowed they should end, then and there; at least so far as concerned the corn-chamber. So after breakfast he went to Matthew, and told him

his own son Tom would be twenty next Monday, and he wished him to have a place of trust. 'So, Mat, you must deliver up your key to Tom on that day, and go to him when you want corn, or ought else out of the chamber. And, Mat, I hope you will come and sup with us that day, and drink Tom's health.'

Black, contrary to his straightforward manner, did not look Matthew in the face as he made this announcement. He therefore did not see the sudden change which came over Prince's face. With forced composure and almost gaiety Matthew complied with his master's wish, but in his heart he felt sure he was betrayed—some one had seen him, and told of him. And the more he thought of it all that day, the more persuaded he was that Charley had told. Charley had met him one moonlight night last winter with a bag over his shoulder. That was it! Charley was the betrayer.

'And now the key's gone, and I'm suspected!' growled Matthew to himself. 'Well, I didn't think John Black would have served me so, if I had taken all he had—such old friends as we are. Friend! I hate the name! The only friend a man has is himself. But that young whelp I'll punish, if my name is Matthew Prince! And I'll go to America. I'll sell up and go! Folk don't look at me as they used, and that Hawkins is for ever calling about his bill—I'm to be county-courted if I don't pay him. Yes, I'll punish that sneak, and give J. B. a flip, too, for his kindness, and then try what America is like. So I will!'

(To be continued.)

THE FAIR.



RICH lady who lived in the country, not having any children, determined to adopt a modest, industrious girl from among her relations in the town, to bring up as her own child.

So she went one day to the town, and as soon as she had made known her wish she found a number of girls recommending and praising themselves, and

claiming relationship with her.

The lady took very little notice of them, but gave each of the girls a piece of gold, and said to them, 'To-day is the yearly fair; go each of you and buy what you like best; then come to me and let me see what you have bought.'

The girls went away, and in the evening came back very much pleased with their purchases. Almost all of them had bought bright ribbons, rows of pearls, gold-embroidered hoods, and other ornaments, which they showed with great delight to their cousin.

Only one girl named Augusta, the poorest of them all, had not bought anything like the others, but a prayer-book, a distaff, and a dozen spindles



Augusta rewarded for her thoughtfulness.

The lady was very pleased at this. She took Augusta kindly by the hand and said, 'I am very pleased, my dear child, that you should so early turn your thoughts towards piety and industry. The others have by their foolish purchases clearly shown that they think more of vanity and ornament than

of their highest duties. From this time I adopt you as my daughter. Continue to be good and pious, so will God always be with you, and His blessing shall follow you all your life long.'

'Labour and prayer and faith are worth
More than the richest stores of earth.'



Allie reading to Mrs. Harold.

CLYST BARTON.

(Concluded from page 131.)

NEXT day Sue came with a clean face, and hair plastered soberly down over her round forehead, to keep her appointment. It was arranged she should come three times a-week to receive lessons in reading and writing from Mrs. Harold. Sue's longing to learn made Allie more eager, and she herself pro-

posed the regular lessons that Mrs. Harold had feared to begin. They went to see Jim, the lame boy, and Allie took a deeper interest in the flowers when she saw how they were prized in the little dingy room, where no ray of sunshine came.

Month after month passed, and Allie found herself getting happy. She had found the heart-sunshine that makes a city home appear as beautiful as the fairest spot on earth.

Though the purple glens and the dear old Devon hills were as precious as ever to Allie, she learnt to be content even in the dingy city. And day by day, as Mrs. Harold's gentle motherly teaching fell into the child's heart, flowers sprang up there more beautiful than those Allie loved so well—the sweet blossoms of patience and gentleness that, like the daisies, will spring up in every soil that is not choked by weeds.

How bright they make a home, those humble little flowers! A good-tempered word, 'a soft answer that turns away wrath,' a wrongful impulse checked, some small trouble taken patiently—bright, indeed, is the home made beautiful by these.

And summer passed into autumn. Allie, one September day, was giving Sue her weekly lesson in spelling. Rather, she was supposed to be doing so; but the book had fallen to the ground, and the little teacher, with eyes aglow and earnest, eager speech, was telling Sue of Clyst—of the harvest that was being garnered just now from the long deep meadows and the breezy uplands.

Mrs. Harold, who was at the table writing a letter, listened with tears in her eyes. The child's words brought back with freshness a picture of the brave county where she was born. Her letter was a pleasant one, however, and she wrote it with strangely mingled feelings of pain and pleasure. It concerned a secret, a joyful secret, that Mrs. Harold had kept from Allie for a fortnight; but now all was decided, and she was waiting for Sue to go to tell her. But the lesson hardly seemed likely to be over for some time.

'Shouldn't you like to go to Clyst, Sue?' asked Allie.

'I shouldn't mind; but I'd rather live in the town. I'd like to be schoolmistress in our court and live over the greengrocer's.'

This cherished dream, uttered in a low, awe-struck tone, had little effect on Allie.

'You never saw the country, Sue?'

'How's the spelling getting on?' asked Mrs. Harold, cheerily.

Allie took up the book with a flushed face.

'Mamma Harold, Sue says she'd like to be schoolmistress here in this horrid old town! She doesn't know what the country is like.'

'Sue won't be able to teach if she doesn't learn,' said Mrs. Harold, quietly, and the spelling went on with revived energy.

Mrs. Harold sat down in her arm-chair and watched the two faces. Both eager, and yet so very different—different beyond the distinction of birth and rearing.

Mrs. Harold smiled as she thought how puzzled and bewildered Sue would be in the Devon glens, how miserable Allie in the lanes of Manchester.

The spelling-lesson was over at last, and Sue went away happy with a flower for Jim. Allie brought her book and sat down by Mrs. Harold to read. She was reading Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, at her own express desire, attracted by the fervid lines,—

'Breathes there a man with soul so dead

Who never to himself hath said,

This is my own, my native land?'

'Scotland must be almost as good as Devon,' she

remarked one day. It was the highest compliment Allie could pay.

But this afternoon Mrs. Harold had something to tell her.

'Allie,' she said, 'you are going to have a little visitor.'

'A visitor! A little girl?'

'No.'

Mrs. Harold could not longer keep her secret with those bright eager eyes looking up at her.

'Archie is coming, and your father.'

'Archie! father!'

The wild joy that leapt into Allie's face startled Mrs. Harold. She went on to tell the rest.

'Archie is going to a Blind School, where he will learn to read and to play, and every Sunday he will come to us. The school is not in the town—don't fear, Allie. It is a few miles away, among green fields and trees, where Archie will still hear the birds sing and the leaves rustle. Why, little woman, I thought you would be glad!'

'I am—I am,' said Allie, through her tears. 'Oh, Mamma Harold, is it really true? Will Archie learn to read and to play the piano? It is like our old dreams come true. When are they coming—very soon?'

'To-morrow, my dear. I wasn't certain till now, so I would not tell you.'

It was a little while before Allie could believe that all this was true. Mrs. Harold watched the little happy face with a satisfied smile. Presently she said,—

'Now, Allie, we will go for the little drive I spoke of this morning. Run up and put on your things.'

Allie obeyed, brimful of happiness. She saw little of the streets they passed in their drive. She sat holding Mrs. Harold's hand, and talking fast of to-morrow. They left the heart of the town behind at last, and reached a pleasant nook in the suburbs. It was not country, indeed, as Allie understood the word, but there was a stretch of green grass, and some noble trees scattered here and there. Gardens were everywhere around bright gay houses, and the sky was almost as bright and clear as that which drooped over Allie's home.

They stopped before a house, standing back from the road in a square, flat garden. There was a smooth lawn in front with one stately beech rising on it, cool and shadowy, and plenty of beds gay with flowers.

'Wake up,' said Mrs. Harold; 'I want you to look at this house, Allie.'

And even the thought of to-morrow was forgotten for a moment in the sight of something so fresh, and pure, and green, as the garden and the tree, that was so like the beeches that shadowed the garden-wall at Clyst.

Mrs. Harold led her through the vacant rooms, showing her all the pretty glimpses of the park from the windows. And they came back to the garden, and Allie sat down under the beech in great content to feel once more the quiver of leaves over her, and look up to see the blue sky beyond.

'Allie,' said Mrs. Harold, 'would you like to live here? It is close to Archie's school.'

Allie understood in a moment, and sprang up, this

fresh surprise being almost too much for her to bear. Mrs. Harold knew what the eloquent look meant of Allie's tearful eyes.

'You pay me back every day,' she said, kissing her adopted daughter, 'my little sunshine! You don't owe me anything.'

Allie sighed a long blissful sigh, in very fulness of content. After a little talk they sat down once more for a time under the beech, which was Allie's favourite spot at once.

It was strange. The whisper of the leaves had a new sound, sweet and familiar as it was. In Clyst they had only told her of their glad green life, and of the birds' nests hidden among them, and of the sky above them; but now Allie heard new voices speaking in the tree-top. Mrs. Harold interpreted them to the little girl, to whom they were strange and new.

'They are saying that happiness does not come from outward things alone. It has its growth and strength, like we have, from within. Our beauty and freshness come from the sap, the spirit of the tree; and the beauty and freshness of your life, little girl, can only come from the inner life, from the Holy Spirit of God, which is given to all, that your days might be as glad and beautiful as we are.'

That is what the leaves told Allie. Many times they whispered the lesson to her, for she lived in the house many years, and saw them often fall and die and bloom again.

Every summer she went to Clyst with Archie and Mrs. Harold; but her Manchester home was at last as dear to her as Devon. Sue was not forgotten. She and Allie were always close friends; and Sue worked hard, and one day, perhaps, may fulfil her cherished dream and become teacher to the school and live over the greengrocer's shop.



BROWN BOB.

OME of my little readers who have never been in the country, and do not know the delight of seeing the flowers blooming, and the pretty squirrels leaping from tree to tree in the woods, or running along upon the mossy turf, may be pleased with this short history of Brown Bob.

Brown Bob was neither more nor less than a pretty, bright-eyed, little squirrel; a great pet of all our household. He was brought to us by a girl, one afternoon in the latter end of March, 1871, tied up in a handkerchief. What a tiny creature he was, to be sure! Like a little brown mouse, with a head much too large for his body. He was too young to eat anything but bread sopped in milk, which we put into his mouth with a spoon handle. He slept at night in a large worsted sock; he would creep into the toe, and curl himself round in the happiest manner possible. In the daytime he was either in one of our pockets, or on my sister's lap by the fire: for warmth is almost more important for young squirrels than food. Soon, however, he grew too big for the woollen sock, and we made him a nest in a large box filled with

flannel. As soon as he could run well we set him on the floor, and allowed him to climb about and poke his little nose everywhere.

One day there was a terrible outcry, Bob was lost! not to be found anywhere!

He had been running about the drawing-room in the morning, and we thought it was about time for him to go back to his box. We hunted and called, and looked high and low; no Bob could we find. At length we were obliged to give up the search, and we were sad at the thought that our pet was gone. He might have got out at the door, or window, we could not tell. I sat down on the sofa and took the cushion to put at my back; when my hand came in contact with a little warm ball inside the lining. 'Oh, here's Bob!' I cried, and so he was. He had crept into the cushion through a hole in the back, and had fallen asleep. You may fancy how glad we were, for we had quite given him up for lost.

He soon got a splendid tail like a fox's brush, and he used to run up and down the curtains, and along the curtain-pole, waving his tail like a plume.

He made a most curious noise whenever he had achieved any wonderful feat, or when he had anything particularly good given him to eat. I can only express it by the word, 'Took,' which he would repeat over and over again.

As he got older he had a little blue collar made for him, to which was fastened a string, in order that we might take him out; but he was so terrified by the sounds in the air that we gave up taking him out: moreover, he did not like the collar at all. He would put his fore paws round his neck; do anything rather than have it on. We taught him to beg like a dog for beech-nuts and biscuits. He looked so comical as he sat up with his bright eyes eagerly waiting for biscuits or nuts. This winter being a very damp one, poor Bob got rheumatism in his back and hind legs. Poor little creature! it was so sad to see him painfully dragging himself along the floor, where, the summer before, he had frolicked about like a kitten, playing with everything he could get hold of. The pain did not improve his temper, and he became almost savage to strangers. One morning he had a fit, which frightened us, and my father thought he would not live much longer, and wished to put him out of his misery: but we could not bear the thought of killing our pet, and we hoped that he might get over it in time. But one morning I came downstairs, and there was no little brown nose pushed through the crack in his box, and no scratching of claws, impatient to be taken out, and caressed, and fed. I opened the box with many misgivings, and alas! I found that, as I feared, our pet was dead.

There he lay, poor, pretty Brown Bob, with his bright little eyes closed, and his soft fur all rough and soiled! Poor Brown Bob! M.

Answers to Letter Puzzles. (P. 135).

1. Python. 2. Chameleon. 3. Alligator.
4. Rattlesnake.
2. Ibis.
3. Belfast.



Brown Bob.

Parts I. to IV. for January, February, March, and April, 1875, are now ready, price Threepence each.
All the back Numbers may be had, price One Halfpenny each.

Chatterbox.



Home from the Show. By HARRISON WEIR.

HOME FROM THE SHOW.

ONE morning, I was hardly drest,
They snatched me from my happy home,
And squeezed me in a wooden chest,
As dark as any Cat-a-comb.

I spat—I swore—I struggled hard;
My mistress gave the lid a kiss,
And wrote, with tears, upon the card,
'The Cat Show—the Metropolis.'

They put us in a lofty place,
It smelt of sawdust, gas, and fog;
And there a clerk, with sallow face,
Soon booked me in a Cat-a-logue.

And many were the sounds of rage,
The bristling tails, and gleaming eyes;
For cats by thousands, cage on cage,
Were there competing for a prize.

Cats from the Shannon, Tweed, and Rhine;
From Cairo, Ispahan, and Metz.
And judges, skilled in lore feline,
With business look and red rosettes.

Beside us bearded Grenadiers
Plied squeaking flutes and hoarse trombones;
And high-born dames, and stately peers,
And Mrs. Smith and Mr. Jones;

And all the motley London crowd,—
The six-foot man, the undersized,
The stout, the slim—met, chatted, bowed,
Compared, condemned, and criticized.

A Marchioness, admiring, eyed
My graces o'er from head to tail.
'What is her price?' A clerk replied,
'My lady, she is not for sale.'

The crowds dispersed; the scarlet men
Put up their drums and winding horns;
And here am I at home again,
A medal now my breast adorns.

But, mistress dear, whilst I'm alive,
O never, never part from me;
I'm sure I never could survive
So dreadful a Cat-astrophe.

G. S. O.

HONESTY REWARDED.

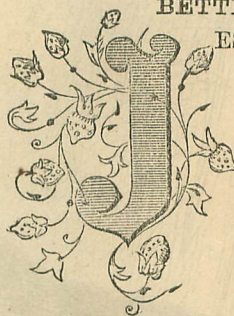
ABOUT nine years ago a Swiss watchmaker from Canton Berne, named Huguelet, emigrated to America, and found a situation with a rich watch-dealer at Charleston. The war soon after broke out, and ended with the entry of the Federal troops into that city, which was the head-quarters of the Southern party.

Huguelet's master, feeling himself gravely compromised, took to flight, in order that he might place his life in safety. His stock which he estimated at the value of 800,000 francs, he left behind him. Huguelet did not lose his head; he packed up the watches and jewellery in chests, which in the night he buried in the cellar and in the garden. Thus all

these goods were preserved from the plunder which ensued, and the Federal troops treated him, as a Swiss, with leniency: indeed Huguelet was able to sell 10,000 francs worth of the watches which he had kept in the shop. When tranquillity was once more restored his master came home again, thinking to find himself a poor man. But the honest Swiss surprised him with the news that his entire stock was safe, but concealed. The American was so deeply touched by this conduct, that he at once made over the half of his property to Huguelet and took him into partnership; so that the humble assistant suddenly came into possession of several hundred thousand francs.

J. F. C.

BETTER THAN BEAUTY.



JESSIE was once a pretty little girl, with soft dark eyes, shining curls, and smooth rosy cheeks; but that was long ago, before her face had been seamed and scarred by that terrible foe to good looks—Small-pox. Still there was a kind of beauty left to the child, which it was not in the power of disease to destroy.

The loss of both parents had caused her to become an inmate of her uncle's house, and it was shortly after her arrival there that she caught the complaint prevalent in the neighbourhood at the time. The poor little girl was so ill that for many days her life was despaired of; however, youth and a strong constitution prevailed, and health slowly returned.

Jessie's aunt nursed her kindly and carefully, but notwithstanding all precautions her own children caught the infection, one after the other, until at last, Anne, the youngest, the pet of the household, was seized, and in a few days carried off from those who loved her here by One to Whom she was still dearer, and Who called her to dwell with Him for ever.

At length this time of trial passed away. The elder girls were restored to their usual health and good looks, and all things returned to their ordinary course, but to the sorrowing parents a dreary blank remained; the 'vacant chair at the fireside' was there, and they missed the sound of a merry laugh, which used to echo through the house, and they missed a light step which formerly bounded to meet them. Jessie said little, but she deeply felt for the grief of her uncle and aunt. An idea took possession of her mind that she was in some measure the cause of this misfortune; she argued with herself that if she had not come, small-pox might not have entered the family, and Annie would have been still alive.

This thought haunted her, until at length, imagining the very sight of her disfigured countenance was disliked by every one, she would shrink into some corner, and cry as if her heart would break. Mrs. Summers was too much absorbed in her own sorrow to notice her niece's strange conduct, and so the

child grew each day more morbidly sensitive and reserved. Her cousins, Grace and Lucy, no doubt regretted their little sister, but at that age grief is not lasting, and in a short time they recovered their spirits enough to amuse themselves as usual. They could not understand Jessie's feelings, and perceiving that she continued dull and silent they supposed that she was fretting over her changed appearance.

'How stupid Jessie has grown!' they remarked to each other. 'There is no fun in playing with her now.' And not finding her society amusing, they soon almost ceased to notice her.

During these days of undisturbed quiet a great change was wrought in Jessie's mind. She saw that shrinking from and avoiding the friends who had been kind to her, was not the best way to remedy the evil of which she had been the unwilling cause. 'No,' thought she, 'I have been acting altogether wrongly. It would have been better to have tried some plan of making myself useful and helpful. I will begin now; the sight of me will no doubt recall their grief, but after a while they will not mind so much. I know it is disagreeable to look at me, but as God has willed it for some good reason of His own, I ought the more to exert the powers He has left, and perhaps some one might like me still.'

So Jessie set about trying to please her uncle and aunt by various small attentions and a ready, obliging manner. Since Annie's death Mrs. Summers had been in delicate health, and now Jessie did many a little office for her unbidden, until at last she was rewarded by hearing her say, 'Jessie has grown to be such a comfort, she stays beside me when the other girls are out; I do not know what I should do without her.' How delightful were these words to the poor child's heart! 'Aunt does not hate me,' she kept repeating to herself. Perhaps Grace and Lucy might come to like me, too.'

Time passed on; Mrs. Summers grew stronger, and was again able to take her place in the household. The girls were sent back to school, and Jessie accompanied them; at first it was a great trial to feel that her companions noticed her disfigured face, but she bore it bravely, and tried the more to be kind and obliging, so that soon she became a universal favourite. And now, her cousins applied to her for assistance at their lessons, and though she was not a lively companion they were sure to find her ready and willing to help in any difficulty.

One evening Grace and Lucy had been invited to a children's party by a school-fellow, and having obtained their mother's consent, they hurried home to prepare for the pleasure. It happened that Mr. and Mrs. Summers had been called away unexpectedly to visit a sick friend, so the girls dined alone, and went afterwards to their room to consult on which dresses they should wear. This important matter having been decided, Grace complained of feeling tired after a long walk, and declared she must lie down and take a sleep to be fresh and bright for the party.

'What a lazy girl!' exclaimed Lucy. 'I will go down and finish the story I am so much interested in, and when it is time to dress I suppose I may awake you.'

'Yes,' replied Grace; 'and be sure you're not late.'

Accordingly Lucy was soon busy with her book, and Grace really fell asleep, while Jessie wandered out to the garden, where, pacing up and down, she pondered on many things. First, on what a lonely evening she must spend, for the poor girl felt too shy and sensitive now to enjoy scenes of gaiety, and she seldom accompanied her cousins to such parties, although she was frequently invited. Then her thoughts turned, as usual, to Annie, and it occurred to her, that had the little one lived she would most likely have been disfigured also, and yet how beautiful she is now in heaven, and I too shall lose all these ~~ag-~~ marks when we meet there.' Just as she was rejoicing over this idea, a bright light appeared in the window of her cousin's room. 'The girls have gone up to dress already,' she thought, 'perhaps I ought to go in and help them; but what a number of candles they must have to make such a glare!' Then on approaching the window, she exclaimed, 'The room must be on fire!' and hurrying to the house she met Lucy in the hall and told her what she feared. Lucy rushed upstairs across the passage, and bursting open the door, uttered a loud cry, and, grasping her cousin's arm, said, 'Yes, yes, all smoke and flame,—don't try to go in, it is impossible!'

It was too true, indeed; for the girls, when looking over their dresses early in the evening, in the excitement of the discussion, held the candle too near, and closed the press hastily without perceiving that part of a light muslin skirt had caught fire. Jessie begged the terrified Lucy to call the servants, and give the alarm.

'But Grace will be burned to death before anything can be done to save her.'

'Where is she now?'

'Oh! asleep on her bed in the midst of the fire.'

Jessie did not wait to hear more, but she ran to the garden as fast as her trembling limbs would carry her, and gazed at the window of the burning room.

A large fig-tree had been trained over the back of the house, and Jessie remembered having seen a ladder against the wall where the gardener had been nailing the upper branches that very day. Quickly she found the ladder leaning against the wall, and pushed it along nearer to the window; then the brave girl mounted it, and shouted loudly to her sleeping cousin. Receiving no answer to her cries Jessie, by a desperate effort, reached the window, and succeeded in throwing it open. A volume of smoke met her, but the brave girl pushed through it and reached the bedside. She then shook her sleeping cousin, who started up exclaiming,—

'What is the matter? Surely it is not time to dress already!'

'Oh, get up quickly! don't you see the room is on fire?'

Grace's senses had hardly returned, but she sprang from the bed, and rushed to the window.

'You must get your foot on the ladder. It is to the right, I will stand here and hold your hand till you get your foot on the top step.' And steadily she did stand there, although the smoke and heat became almost suffocating, until Grace reached the ladder and descended to the ground in safety. Then Jessie followed, and, faint and trembling, threw herself on the grass from fright and exhaustion.



By this time the alarm had spread, and many neighbours arrived to offer help. The room in which the sisters slept was in a separate wing of the building, therefore by great exertions the rest of the house was preserved, and the flames were put out without spreading further.

Mr. and Mrs. Summers hurried home in sad anxiety about their children, and were much relieved

when Grace and Lucy met them, full of the tale of Jessie's courage and presence of mind. Then her aunt, taking the girl in her arms, thanked and blessed her over and over again for having saved her child from such a terrible death; and Jessie was happy, feeling that, though plain and disfigured, it was still possible to be loved and valued, and that there is after all something better than beauty.

S. T. A. R.



The Crow and the Fox. By HARRISON WEIR.

THE CROW AND THE FOX.

UPON an oak-tree sat a Crow,
 And pecked a pilfered piece of cheese:
 A Fox was passing down below,
 And gazing up among the trees.
 He happened thus to see the bird;
 And when the piece of cheese he spied,
 A method to his mind occurred
 To gain it, which at once he tried.
 'Oh, what a lovely bird!' he said;
 'What ebon plumage, thick and sleek!
 How rare a form! how fine a head!
 What pointed claws, and glossy beak!
 Oh, with such beauty, what a voice
 That paragon must surely own!
 'Twould make my very heart rejoice
 To listen to its charming tone.'
 He ceased; but still with steadfast gaze
 Bent upward stood a little while,
 As if in rapture and amaze.
 The silly Crow believed the guile,
 And fain would prove how sweet her note
 (She might have thought it sweet, no doubt);
 Her bill she opened, and her throat
 A grating croak or two gave out.
 But mid her musical display
 She dropped the lump of cheese, when lo!
 To her unspeakable dismay,
 'Twas swallowed by the Fox below.

We should not heed what flatterers say,
 Unless their price we wish to pay. R. E.

THE CHANGED LETTER.

(Continued from page 139.)

CHAPTER III.

THE corn had been gathered in, and, as the wont was, Redesdale Harvest Festival took place. A learned Archdeacon, brother-in-law of Mr. Inghu, the Rector, came to preach the sermon. Suitable inscriptions, in letters that were a puzzle to many honest Redesdale folk, scrambled on the walls and over the windows. Three comely sheaves stood before the Lord's Table—flowers shone upon the whitewashed pillars, and shed their fragrance around. Wondrous things were done by the choir, and well did they earn the good tea which awaited them afterwards. Young John Black was in the choir—the only Black who could sing.

One small mishap occurred, which gave rise to some confusion. Mr. Inghu had lost the paper on which the numbers of the hymns were written. He therefore made a sign to Charley, who happened to be sitting near, and looking that way, to come to the desk. Charley came, and Mr. Inghu whispered him to bring word what hymns they were. The organist, instead of writing them down, told Charley 136, 259, 51, and Charley, trusting to his memory, and having neither pencil nor paper, hurried back, and telling Mr. Inghu, returned to his place. But even now it was not all well, for a wrong hymn was given out, the first verse read, and Nunns, the organist, was in despair. His music-book was open at the tune selected, but the hymn given out was a different

metre. The singers looked at each other—there was an awkward pause, and Mr. Inghu perceived a wrong hymn had been announced. He, therefore, as the shortest way of setting matters straight, walked down to the other end of the church, and having taken a newly pencilled list of the hymns, returned to the desk.

Now it was not much of a thing, but all the people were waiting, the singers were annoyed, and Nunns called Charley a blockhead for taking a blundering message. John Black nudged his neighbour, Tom Ward, and whispered, 'Just like my clever cousin!' Charley could not repress his vexation. To have been honoured by a public commission and to have done it so ill! But he felt sure he had heard Nunns say 136, 259, 51, and he was equally sure he had repeated those same numbers to the clergyman, and 136 it was which he gave out directly he returned to the desk. Charley scarcely heard a single word of the succeeding prayers, he was so anxious to remember 259, 51, and to compare them with the two remaining hymns. He was sure his cousins would plague him about this, and he burned with the desire to be able to acquit himself of blame. Charley was not meek. Very few boys are. He resented injuries. His spirit was easily excited, and in the anticipation of fresh insults he forgot his Maker and the business he was about.

Little cared Charley that afternoon for the 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.' There was nothing in his mind but 259, 51. He would not lose those numbers. He would grasp them as old John Drake, the blacksmith, grasped a piece of iron in his vice. If Mr. Inghu gave out 259 before the sermon, and 51 afterwards, then he, Charley, would be able to stand before the world clear from the charge of blundering. Little did he hear of the Archdeacon's eloquent discourse upon the sheaf of the first-fruits, which was to be waved before the Lord before any one might eat bread, or parched corn, or even green ears. The sermon ended, Charley waited almost trembling until the hymn was announced. It was, as he thought it would be, number 51, and as it was sung a great load rolled off his mind. The plates went round, but he had nought except a good will to offer. Money was an article he scarcely ever saw or touched. The folk dispersed, except a few who were not ashamed of appearing interested in the decorations; these, after walking round the church, and lavishing their admiration upon the good taste and industry of the young ladies of Redesdale, retired to criticise the learned discourse of the dignitary, and other matters, ecclesiastical as well as civil, over an unusually good cup of tea, brewed in honour of the occasion.

At the Blacks' house supper was esteemed more highly than tea. Mrs. Black, a tall, gaunt woman, was superintending the preparations for that meal, about eight o'clock. Her husband was in his usual chair, looking into the fire, as men will, for suggestions. Tom was playing 'Beggar my neighbour' with Joe. Three girls, Ann, Bessy, and Janet, were in the parlour, preparing lessons for to-morrow, and the three youngest were in bed. Janet was not fond of arithmetic: it made her head ache, she said. And

she liked Charley, because he helped her over those long, hard columns of eights and nines. To-night he was away, quite contrary to expectation, and Janet, who had trusted to him, was in tears. Ann and Bessy had been teasing her, and that made matters no better. Several rough messages had come from Tom and Joe to 'stop that noise,' and the wonder is Mr. Black did not interfere. He had not yet told his wife that Matthew Prince was a villain.

Eight o'clock was being rung by the old parish clerk when young John Black and his cousin Charley came in together.

'Why, wherever have you been, Charles?' said Mrs. Black. 'Your tea is in the larder, and it's all you'll get to-night.'

Charley took his place in silence, and for a few moments hesitated whether he should eat the cold viands so coldly thrust upon him; but he had heard a little sermon which had done him more good than the Archdeacon's, so he subdued the evil spirit, and munched his thick bread and butter, and sipped his cold tea, which smelt, he thought, like senna.

'And where have you been, Charles?' said John Black, after he had catered for his guests. 'I don't like this being out late without leave, and will not have it; d'ye hear?'

'Why, father,' put in Jack, 'Charley has been at Mr. Inghugh's, and has had tea with us, and is going to be a singer!'

'At Mr. Inghugh's?' said Mrs. Black. 'Well, I always thought Charles rather forward, but I didn't think he would go and get invited to the singers' feast, when he isn't a singer. If I had been you, Charles Yates, I would not have thrust myself in there.'

'Oh,' said Joe, laughing, 'Charley was only paid for his excellent services at church. Didn't you see him carrying wrong messages between Sam Nunns and Mr. Inghugh?'

Charley's face was growing very hot, and his lips began to tremble, but the remembrance of the little sermon was fresh in his mind, and he tried to be calm, and let the storm blow over.

But it was not to be. 'Oh,' said Jack, 'I believe Charley went up to Mr. Inghugh after service, and said how sorry he was he had been so stupid; and he did it so sly that he quite got round the Vicar, and was asked to tea.'

'No, John,' said Charley, still trying to be very calm, and to look pleasant,—'no, you are mistaken; I did no such thing. May I explain?'

'Explain?' said Mrs. Black; 'explain what? The matter's plain enough already—you make a bungle, and go afterwards and get asked to tea for it, instead of being sent about your business with a good scolding to make you more careful for the future. You can't explain without making your conduct seem worse. If I were you I'd say nothing.'

'Oh, yes, mother,' said Ann Black, 'I'm sure if you'd been in our pew you would have felt very uncomfortable. There was such a silence for ever so long. Mr. Inghugh waited, after he had given out the hymn, and people turned round to see if Nunns had been taken with a fit; and then Mr. Inghugh had to leave his place and walk down to the organ to get a correct copy of the hymns himself.'

'Well, I'm very glad I wasn't there,' said her mother, because, though Charles Yates is no relation of mine, he is my husband's nephew; and if I had been by when such a blunder happened, I should not have known where to look.'

'Well, Charles, lad,' said his uncle, 'I think they make a vast too much of it. It wasn't much, after all. Nunns should have put down the numbers on a bit of paper. But how did it happen, if Jack's isn't the true tale?'

Charley would now have been glad to say nothing, for he knew the mistake was Mr. Inghugh's, and Mr. Inghugh always was so kind, and had been so especially kind that afternoon, that Charley felt he would bear any blame sooner than the fault of so trivial an accident should be laid on the good rector. But he was obliged to answer his uncle, so he simply said, 'After the service Mr. Inghugh came to me, and said, "We made rather a mess of it." Then he asked me if I could not sing. I said, I could a little, and he said something to the Archdeacon about orphans, and asked me to go and have tea directly.'

'I think,' said Mrs. Black, 'as I was not a singer, I would have said, I'm obliged to you, sir, but my uncle will perhaps want me. You need not have gone, and my opinion is you ought not.'

John Black now rose and went out, leaving poor Charley among his tormentors.

'Yes, Charley not only went, but he contrived to shine ever so much,' said Jack. 'The parson's quite took to Charley. But I think with you, mother, it was mean!'

'Mean!' cried Charley. 'What was there in it mean? Why am I to be called mean because I went to tea? Why am I to be treated as you all treat me?' And the lad began to cry.

'I wouldn't whimper if I were you, Charles Yates. Nor would I say anything about bad treatment,' said Mrs. Black. 'You get food and shelter given you for nothing, and you might be civil, and show respect to your kind friends, I do think.'

Mrs. Black rose up as she said this, and went with the girls upstairs. The lads were now left together, and the banter went on, until Charley's face grew very dark; and when he could bear it no longer, he darted from the room to the door, muttering something about serving his persecutors out.

'So he'll serve us out,' said Joe. 'Lip-salve—plenty of it.'

'What does he mean?' asked Tom. 'How serve us out?'

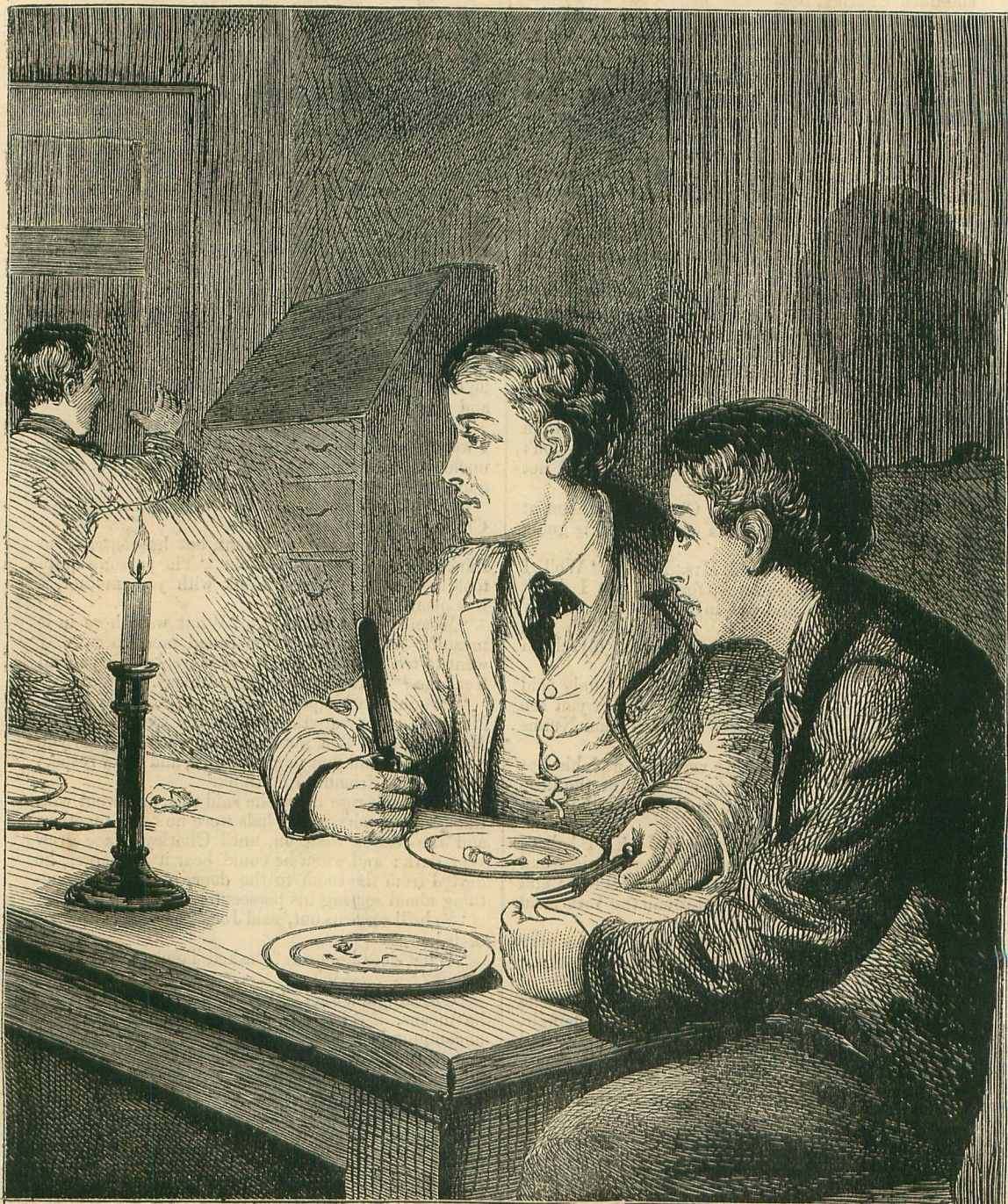
'Oh,' laughed Jack, 'he'll not sing. That's what he means. Why, I'll tell you, he did come out uncommon before the parson, and the parson's wife, and other gents and ladies. The Archbishop said—'Was it Archbishop?'

'Archdeacon,' said Tom.

'Ay, Archdeacon. He praised Charley no end, and said he'd do for Brixter Minster. I thought the fellow would be ever so cocky after it, and so he is. He'll serve us out, by holding that sweet tongue of his.'

'If that's all,' said Joe, 'we needn't break our rest for crying. But let's go to bed, for we have to be up extra early to-morrow.'

(To be continued.)



Charlie darted from the room to the door.

Parts I. to IV. 1875, price Threepence each, are now ready. All the back Numbers may be had, price One Halfpenny each.

Chatterbox.



The Inspector questioning Mary Still.

THE CHANGED LETTER.

(Continued from page 151.)

CHAPTER IV.



HERE was a fire in Black's stack-yard about a month after the harvest festival. It was the old story so often repeated. A strong glare on John's window-blind aroused him, and he hurried downstairs, half dressed, shouting, 'Fire! fire! the stacks are on fire!' He was surprised to find the outer door unbolted and ajar, for he felt sure he

was the first in the house to take alarm, his window in a gable being the only one which looked on the stacks. But, without thinking any more about it, he hurried out and saw that one stack was in flames, and another ready to ignite at any moment.

He could scarcely remember afterwards how he acted that night—how he alarmed the village, by shouting as he raced along the street; how he clamoured at the old clerk's door for the church keys; how a nightcapped head flung them out of a chamber window; how he sent Tom and Joe to the steeple to jangle the bells, the more madly the better; how Jack was sent express to knock up the Rector; how the Blackwater engine came hotly down the hill after, it seemed, a century of delay; how the flames lit up the moving figures, and turned the barns into gold; how lines were formed to pumps and ponds; and buckets, pails, watering-pots, anything that would hold water, were made useful; how freely Black's beer flowed; how hoarse he got with shouting; and how comforted he felt when the fire was mastered, and gave up its hold, with only the loss of two stacks of wheat and one of straw.

'Now, who has done this thing?' was the question on every lip, in every heart. Of course, Black thought of Matthew as the person most likely to injure him, but who could suspect a man so indefatigable in his attempts to quench the fire? No one but John Black would have any reason to suspect him, and even John was quite disarmed by Matthew's risking his life to prevent further damage. Some vagabonds had been driven off the premises by Mrs. Black the day before, and they had pelted her with stones, and had shaken their dirty fists at her with words of wrathful vengeance, and she, of course, looked upon the fire as their kindling. Others thought it might be a former labourer of John Black's, who had been convicted, at his instance, of poaching, and who was supposed, therefore, to owe him a grudge; but he had taken to a roving life, being half a gipsy by birth, and for a twelvemonth had not been seen nor heard of.

When the excitement was over, and nothing remained of the fire but black heaps of smoking ashes, it became necessary to make an inquiry into its origin. Two policemen were now in possession of the ground, and were trying to put the links of the chain together. From a broken gap in the hedge of the orchard, the tallest policeman fancied he could discern very clear marks of footsteps,

right up toward the stack which first caught fire. They were lost, of course, near the stack, being trampled out by many feet. It was evident that some one, most probably a boy, had gone, not long ago, from that gap towards that stack. The ground was in rare order for taking impressions. So far, the guilty one was extremely unlucky.

'Come here, mate,' cried the tall policeman to his shorter brother. 'Come and see if this isn't a likely find.'

The shorter man in blue came, as desired, and having very carefully examined the traces up to, and on the other side of the hedge, answered,—

'It will do! Now,' continued he, 'you keep here, and I will go and call the governor.'

The chief having arrived, a thorough investigation of the footprints, and the premises generally, was gone through, and it was decided that there was evidence against the wearer of the boots which made those marks. A court of inquiry was held in Black's parlour, and the shoes belonging to all the lads were examined. Black said he remembered finding his outer door open when he rushed forth to the flaming stack, and although he was too excited then to think how much it meant, he now felt it threw the shadow of guilt upon some member of his household. The footmarks were too small for Tom or Jack—and Joe slept in a little room within his own. The inspector tried the shoes of Dan, the servant-boy, and Charley, but though each was the proper size, the impressions of the nails were totally unlike. The inspector then asked whether there were not other boots or shoes belonging to these two boys. Mary Still produced a pair which evidently had been used lately, especially the right shoe, which was much more dirty than its fellow. One of these, the dirty one, fitted the impression exactly.

'That is the shoe,' said the inspector, 'without a doubt. Whom does this shoe belong to, my girl?'

'That, sir,' answered Mary Still, 'belongs to Charley Yates, my master's nephew!'

CHAPTER V.

'My dear, Sarah says a warrant has been sent, obliging Charles Yates to appear before the magistrates to-day, on a charge of burning the stack,' said Mrs. Inghu to her husband. 'I think the police get more stupid every day. Did you ever hear anything so absurd?'

Mr. Inghu looked incredulous.

'Are you sure it is true? Sarah may have got hold of a wrong story.'

But Sarah, when questioned, assured her master it was too true. She had heard it from one of Mr. Black's sons, as he passed the Rectory gate. Breakfast over, Mr. Inghu put on his hat, and walked down to Black's, where the evil rumour was confirmed.

'Black,' said Mr. Inghu, 'you don't think that boy is capable of setting a stack on fire, do you?'

'Sir,' answered Black, 'I did not; but his shoe-marks have betrayed him. And I fear he is not the boy you think he is. He can be very pleasant, they say, away from home; but we find him sly.'

'But,' answered the clergyman, 'what could tempt the boy, even if he is what you think him, to do you so foul an injury?'

'Sir, I suppose I may not say now all I have to say; but perhaps you will attend the magistrates' meeting, and watch the case. I don't want anything but justice.'

'Of that I'm sure,' replied the Rector. 'Yes, I will go. When do the justices meet?'

'They meet, sir, at noon.'

The case came on, and Black told his story. The policemen exhibited the foot-prints, and showed how exactly they tallied with the shoes. The accused boy declared he had nothing to do with the fire, and that he had never been out of bed until awakened by the shouts of Mr. Black. He believed some one had taken the shoes out of his room, and had used them against him, he did not know why, except to turn away suspicion from himself to a poor friendless boy. He had no grudge against Mr. Black, nor against any of his children, though some of the boys did now and then tease him. All he could say amounted to this, he was quite innocent of the charge now laid against him.

One of the magistrates asked how one shoe was so dirty, and the other almost perfectly clean. No account could be given of this circumstance. Another magistrate asked whether Charles had exhibited any ill-temper, or had taken offence at anything; whether, in fact, there was any cause why he should set his uncle's stacks on fire.

Here Mr. Black said he was much afraid his sons had heard Charles mutter something one night, not very long ago, about serving them out. Upon this the three elder boys averred they had heard their cousin use language that sounded like a threat.

Upon this the magistrates, after some consultation, decided that Charles Yates should be committed to the Flixter prison, to take his trial at the next assizes.

Some stout unbelievers, however, led by a tinker and knife-grinder, who made his annual visit to Redesdale a morning or two after the fire, declared the whole thing was, in the tinker's speech, 'a plant.' The fatal foot-marks were examined after the police had left, and the tinker swore the real sinner had made them himself, by pressing the shoe at regular intervals into the soft earth. 'See,' said the man of pots and kettles, 'every footstep is made by a right shoe. There isn't a left shoe in the whole lot. And see, too, the steps are not regular; look here, and here, and here! Murder will out!' This tinker was an old friend of Charley's father, and though, as he said, Charles Yates did drink himself to death, he was a good-hearted fellow from a tinker's point of view.

Wearily passed the days and weeks in Flixter gaol until the trial came on which was to be the turning-point in Charley's life. There was one pillar of fire in the gloom. He was innocent. Unless he got up and walked through the orchard in his Sunday boots, and lit a match and fired the stack in his sleep, he was guiltless of the charge. And now the lessons taught him by his mother came to his help.

There were, especially, the fragments of a ballad always chiming in his head: and for many days he was vexed with himself that he could not remember where the disjointed words came from, until it all came into his head one morning when he awoke.

'Ay, that is it!' he said: 'it is about young Romilly. Now I have it—now I have it! My dear, dear mother! How it brings her before me! How often have I said it to her,—

"O there was never yet sorrow of heart

That shall lack a timely end,

If but to God we turn, and ask

Of Him to be our friend."

It was Wordsworth's touching ballad, which describes the sad death of the widowed lady's only son by drowning in the river Wharfe. Checked in his leap across the Strid by the greyhound which he held in a leash, he fell into the rapid pent-up river, and was seen no more until he rose a lifeless corpse. Long sat his mother in darkness, but at length she aroused herself to build a stately priory near the place, and

'Slowly did her succour come,

And a patience to her grief.'

The sustained sorrows of this noble lady were an encouragement to Charley. 'Like her, I will pray in heaviness, and my sorrow of heart shall have a timely end. I solemnly commit my way to my mother's God, and He will bring forth my righteousness as the light, and my judgment as the noon-day.'

The Epiphany sessions drew on. The grand jury found a true bill against Charles Yates for stack-burning, and the lad was, after his trial, condemned to seven years' penal servitude; but, in consideration for his youth, he was sent to a Reformatory, with a very dark stain on his character: for a youth who did not scruple to fire a stack wilfully must be unusually depraved—must possess a nerve and will which destine him to become either a great hero or a desperate villain.

(To be continued.)

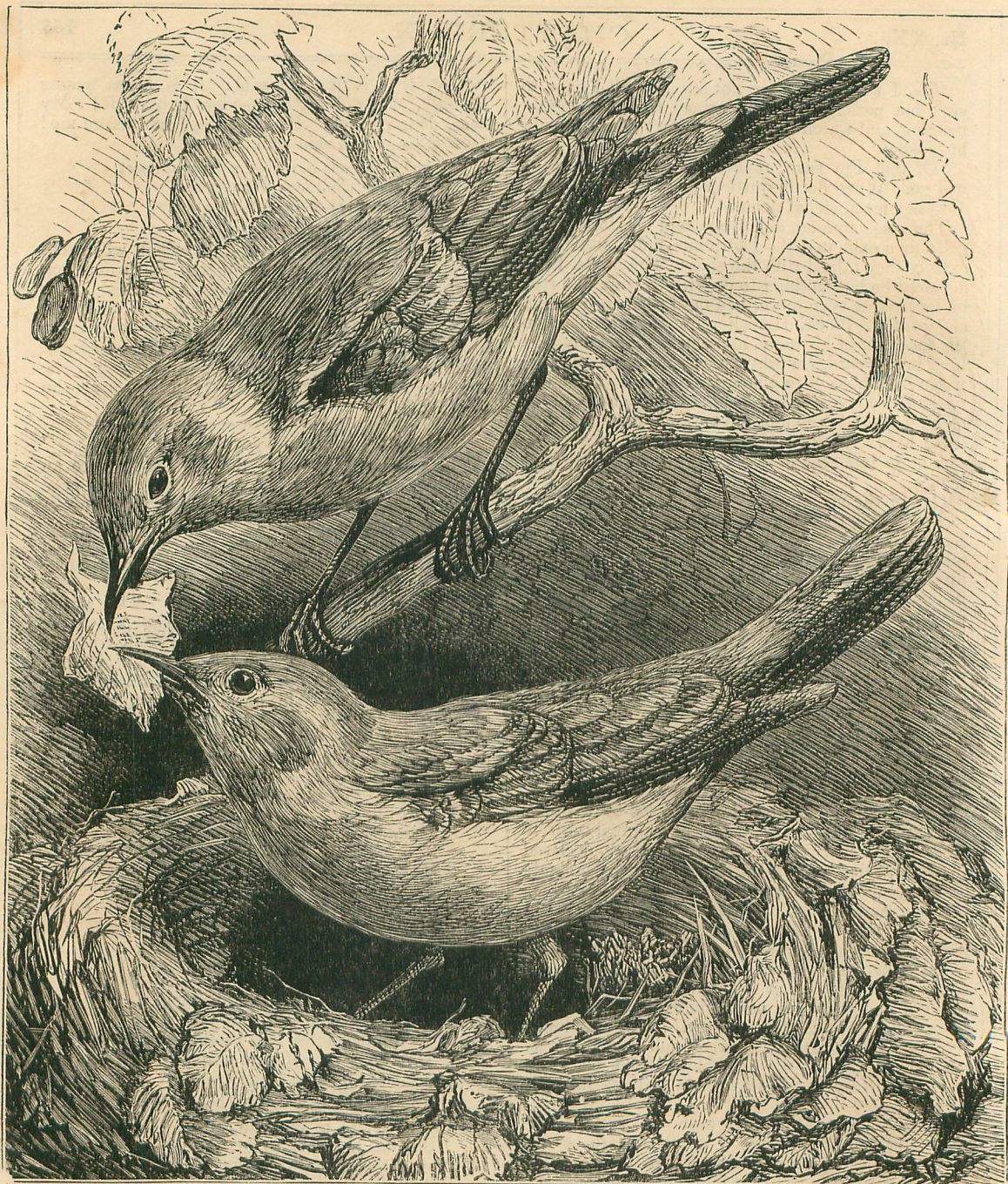
THE NIGHTINGALE.

THE Spring, that brings the sunshine back,
And clothes the earth with flowers,
Brings, too, the gentle Nightingale
Back to her woodland bowers—
Back from her distant winter's home,
In warmer climes than ours.

Upon the spray she sits and sings,
Just where she sang last year;
How full her notes, how passing sweet,
How rich, yet soft and clear!
It seems as if some angel bright
From Heaven was hovering near.

But not alone to sing she comes,
She has her work to do;
Now with her mate she hops around,
And flits the branches through,
To gather roots, and leaves, and grass,
Her nest to build anew.

Within a sheltered, shady copse,
Well hid from mortal sight,
The busy birds lay piece to piece,
And toil from morn till night,
Until the nest is shaped and lined,
And all is placed aright.



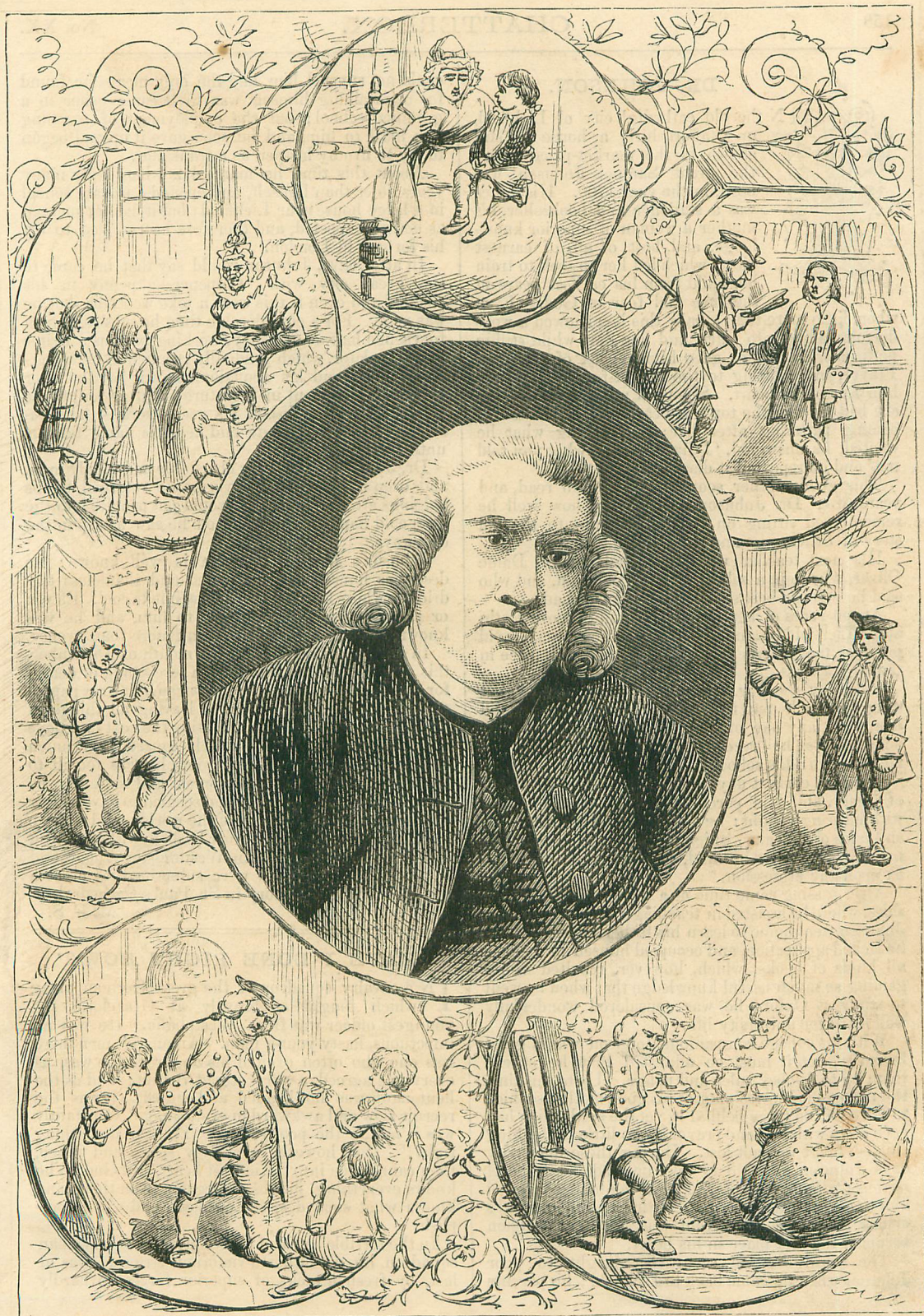
A few more days of balmy spring
Pass o'er the new-made nest,
And five small eggs, of olive brown,
Within its hollow rest,
Kept warm by loving mother bird
Beneath her downy breast.

Her mate sits on the branches near,
And cheers her with his song,
Or flies abroad to find her food

The leafy trees among.
How pleasant is her mother's task!
No days seem dull or long.

Oh, time flies fast to happy birds,
And now the month so fair
Of sunny June has scarce arrived,
When, see! for all their care,
A brood of tiny nightingales
Rewards the loving pair.

H. B. A.



Dr. Johnson.



DR. JOHNSON.

IN the old cathedral city of Lichfield, in Staffordshire, a house is still shown in the market-place where the great Samuel Johnson was born, in the year 1709. His father was a stationer and bookseller, his mother a woman of superior knowledge, and, best of all, of earnest piety, which led her to seek to train her child from his earliest years in the love and fear of God. Even when little more than a baby this boy showed a wonderful readiness to learn, and one day, while still in petticoats, his mother gave him a book of Common Prayer, and pointing to the collect for the day bade him learn it by heart. She went upstairs, but before she had reached the top she heard the little Samuel coming pattering after her; and asking what he wanted, he answered, 'I have learned what you told me,' and he repeated it distinctly.

This good mother soon taught him to read, and years after Dr. Johnson used to say how well he remembered sitting on her lap listening to the old story of St. George and the Dragon.

His next teacher was an old lady called Dame Oliver, who kept a school for little children, and who said he was the best scholar she had ever had.

At ten years of age Johnson began to learn Latin at the Lichfield Grammar-school, and made such rapid progress that in two years' time he rose to a place in the higher class.

Naturally the boy was indolent and careless, but when he really put forth his abilities he always did more than any one of his companions, and the only punishments he received were for talking and laughing with his school-fellows.

From his earliest days Johnson had been very fond of poetry, and had pored over Shakespeare's plays with untiring delight: he loved also to read romances and tales of chivalry, which it is thought caused him to become unsettled in mind, so that he never cared to fix upon any profession.

After passing some time at a school in Worcester-shire, where he assisted in teaching the younger boys, Johnson went home to learn his father's business; but he lacked application, and occupied himself in reading all kinds of books, which, however, resulted in his gaining so much useful knowledge that when he went to study at Oxford he was considered wonderfully well fitted for university life.

With his college companions Johnson was a great favourite, but it must be admitted that he stirred them up to disobey rules and rulers. Up to this time the early religious training of his good mother seemed to have left no trace behind it, yet the seed which had been sown with love and prayer in the little unthinking childish heart was not lost. During these university days Johnson chanced to take up a book entitled *A serious Call to a Holy Life*, and its contents so roused him to earnest thought, and convinced him of God's claims upon him, that from that moment religion occupied the first place in his heart.

The world did not seem very bright to poor Johnson when he came back to Lichfield; his parents

could not support him, and the only means he found for maintaining himself was to become usher in a grammar-school; but the employment of teaching was hard to him, and he soon gave it up and began to try to live by his pen as a translator.

About this time he married a widow lady many years older than himself, and opened a private school in a large house near Lichfield; but it did not succeed as he had expected, and therefore he resolved to try his fortune in London.

In after days, Johnson would say that he came to the great city with 'twopence-halfpenny in his pocket,' and even if this were a joke we know that he was poor. For a considerable time he subsisted upon fourpence halfpenny a-day, working hard as a writer and translator, which gradually resulted in better circumstances, and his acquaintance was sought after by persons eminent in literature; and at length he began and accomplished his great work—the *Dictionary* which has made and kept his name famous until the present time.

Dr. Johnson was a very charitable and kindly man, and even in his poorest days, as he returned to his lodgings after midnight, he would put pennies into the little cold hands of the children he saw asleep in the doorways.

Johnson's fondness for tea is well known: he describes himself as 'a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, whose kettle scarcely has time to cool.' Eleven or twelve cups were nothing to him, and he was known on some occasions to drink more than twenty.

In the year 1784, during the month of December, this great man seemed to have a foreboding of death, for, finding his health going, he began to destroy papers and letters, as if preparing for leaving all things in order when the end came. During the next four days he underwent operations which caused him much pain, and by the 12th of the month he was too ill to leave his bed. As he lay weak and suffering he offered up constant prayer, and seemed to have a clear strong faith in the Saviour of the world; and on the evening of the 13th December he died, without a sign of fear. He was interred in Westminster Abbey, and eleven hundred guineas were subscribed to erect a monument to his memory in St. Paul's Cathedral.

M. F. S.

'HAVE I DONE RIGHT NOW?'

IN a cavalry squadron of the great German army which fought so bravely at Gravelotte the youngest officer was from Westphalia. He was an impetuous, hasty young man. Among his men there was one who often excited his anger, for he was, as every one agreed, a very stupid recruit; and as the lieutenant was hot-headed and quick, so was the recruit slow and awkward in everything. Constantly was it said to the poor recruit, 'You can do nothing right!' But, however men may speak and judge, they cannot see into the inmost heart, and God, Who knows everything, judges differently from them, and knows what such despised ones can and will accomplish.

In the terrible battle of Gravelotte the Westphalian squadron, after a hitherto victorious struggle, was at last, by fresh attacks of superior forces, so hardly

pressed, that the men were separated from each other. Then it happened that our lieutenant, too, parted from the rest of his troop, was fallen upon by two powerful troopers, but by putting forth all his strength he defended himself against these, till his arm became weary and his eye grew dim. He already looked death in the face, and in his heart said farewell to his loved ones at home. But now suddenly, in furious gallop, a horseman rushes up. He had been halting some hundred yards off behind a wall, and in a few moments could safely have rejoined his company, for he had heard the French signal given to retreat, and the trumpets of his own comrades coming nearer. But when he saw his lieutenant in danger of death, with a firm hand he grasped his sword, jumped over the wall, and dealt first to one and then to the other of the hostile troopers blows which stretched them both upon the ground. When after a few moments the lieutenant succeeded in bringing his foaming horse to a standstill, and the soldier, who was no other than the so-called stupid recruit, was again firmly in the saddle, the latter gazed at his officer with beaming eyes and said, 'Have I done right now?'

But before the lieutenant could reply and say, 'Yes, yes, you have indeed done right,' a bullet whizzes from out of the bushes and pierces the soldier through the forehead, so that he drops down dying from his horse. The lieutenant throws himself weeping upon the man, and calls into his ear 'Yes, comrade, you have done right!' He hears no more. He has received his sentence from another Judge!

J. F. C.

THE FIRST SILK-MILL IN ENGLAND.



IN the early part of the seventeenth century the preparation of silk-thread for manufacture was only known to the Italians; and, in consequence, England laboured under the disadvantage of having to procure its raw material from that country. The inconvenience caused by this circumstance led a London firm of the name of Lombe to try to obtain information as to the process employed in Italy. To do this, however, was a service of considerable danger, since the punishment awarded to any one attempting to discover anything concerning the art was death, with the forfeiture of all their goods, the culprit to be painted on the prison walls, hanging to the gallows by one foot. So carefully did the Italians choose to preserve their secret.

Notwithstanding these alarming penalties, however, one of the brothers Lombe, a young man barely past boyhood, determined to obtain the desired information, being fully aware of the enormous importance of it to the English silk-trade. He set out for Leghorn, bent on overcoming every difficulty and facing every danger.

His presence in the country was not a matter of wonder, since English silk-merchants were much in the habit of sending their young sons to traffic with the natives in the raw silk, and John Lombe at first presented himself in this character.

But his next movement was to go through one of the silk-mills, and try, in spite of the rapid and suspicious manner in which visitors were passed through it, to gain some idea of the processes conducted there.

This, however, he found utterly impossible, though he visited the mills again and again, disguised sometimes as a lady, sometimes as a priest, to avoid the suspicion which his frequent appearance as an Englishman would arouse. Neither the closest observation, nor the silver key which often unlocks secrets, was of the slightest avail in this case.

At last he made the acquaintance of a priest, whose character was not sufficiently elevated to prevent him playing the traitor to his country and his friends; for on John Lombe divulging to him his wishes, he caused him to disguise himself as a poor lad in search of employment, and he got him a situation in a mill, with whose owner he was acquainted.

And now young Lombe began indeed to hope for success, though still greater perils awaited him in the pursuit of his aim. He had a sleeping-place given him in the mill itself; and after he had done his day's work his real labours began.

In fear and trembling, at dead of night, the lad studied the deserted machinery, measuring this and sketching that, by the aid of a dark lantern, the gibbet frowning at him in every shadow which haunted the gloomy rooms of the mill. In the day he hid his treasured observations in a hole in the staircase.

Day by day, and week by week, he toiled on, the priest assisting him at times to get his drawings conveyed to England, hidden in bales of silk.

At last every portion of machinery was accurately drawn, and the young adventurer was free to follow his hardly-won secret to his own country. This, however, was a matter requiring care and caution, as he had to wait for a vessel to bear him to safety, while any day might have seen his exposure and disgrace.

The English vessel came not a moment too soon; for before it left the Mediterranean an Italian brig was in pursuit. The hard-working lad was suspected at last. But young Lombe reached England in safety, and master of the method of manufacturing the silk-thread.

A famous silk-mill, the first in England, was now built at Derby, and Sir Thomas Lombe, the head of the house, rapidly rose to wealth and distinction.

It is said that the priest was tortured by his countrymen when the story came out; and perhaps he deserved his punishment. But others say that Mr. John Lombe brought him with him to England, as a safe precaution.

There is yet another ending to the tale, too, which may be true; and that is, that John Lombe died in his native country, in the prime of life, poisoned by an Italian woman sent over for that purpose.

The Italians are very persistent in dogging an enemy, and as such they must have regarded one who had stolen so important a trade secret.

Everything is said to be fair in love and war; but whether it is equally fair in commerce is not so certain. At any rate, this is the story which is attached to England's first silk-mill.

H. A. F.



The first Silk-mill in England. By W. H. Boor.

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Chatterbox.



A four-footed thief. By HARRISON WEIR.



A FOUR-FOOTED THIEF.

THE *Paris Figaro* says:—‘On Friday a new kind of robber was arrested not far from a hatter’s, and holding a hat between his teeth. When efforts were made to take the hat away he stood on the defensive, and there was a fight, which ended very badly for the hat. The thief was a dog. His master, who has not yet been found, had taught him to bring home goods to him for sale, and the hatter accuses him of having carried off no less than six hats within a week.’

A TRUE STORY OF A ‘BAND OF HOPE’ BOY.

THE north-east wind was rough and cold,
When those who passed a doorway saw
A little boy just ten years old,
A gentle child, named Jemmy Shaw,
Waiting with patience, thinly clad,
Right opposite a liquor-shop.

The father of that little lad
With bad companions there would stop,
Drinking and singing, caring not,
So recklessly their time they spent;
For they their weekly wage had got,
And to get drunk was their intent.

There until midnight they would be:
And when the landlord turned them out,
That silly, drunken company,
Like senseless savages would shout
Some foolish, ribald, drunken song;
Which when poor Jemmy heard, then he
Would lead his father from the throng,
Home to his wife and family.

Week after week that wicked man
Pursued his selfish, cruel plan;
And all who passed that dramshop saw,
Each Saturday, pale Jemmy Shaw,
Silently waiting, thinly clad,
To take his father home—poor lad!

One winter’s night the wind so fierce,
Blew strong, and sharp enough to pierce,
And freeze the marrow in his bones,
But there stood Jemmy on the stones;
Anxiously longing, without doubt,
To see the general turning-out.

Hard by that shop a river ran;
Near to the back-door was a pier;
And from that door a tipsy man
Was seen to stagger; then a clear,
Shrill cry of ‘Help!’ was heard; and soon,
For very brightly shone the moon,
Struggling for life some persons saw,
The father of poor Jemmy Shaw.
The waters closed above his head.

Some bargemen soon the body found;
Alas! the vital spark had fled;
The drunken father thus was drowned.

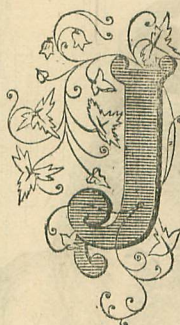
They took the body home, and then
Told what had happened, how, and when.
But, little Jemmy: where was he?
‘Run to the doorway! run and see!’
A pitying crowd soon gathered there,
Where Jemmy lay, upon the stair,
As if asleep. The wind in deep
And mournful tones came sobbing round,
As if it knew, and pitied too,
The boy whose father had been drowned.
And then a cry arose on high,
While many a tear the kind folk shed,
For that poor lad, so thinly clad,
Would wake no more. He lay there dead!

JOHN P. PARKER.

THE CHANGED LETTER.

(Continued from page 155.)

CHAPTER VI.



JANET dropped a few genuine tears at the trouble which had befallen poor Charley, always so kind to her; but matters went on at Black’s farm pretty much as they had done before. Matthew Pince still cherished his intention of going to America. He was not the same man since he had been obliged to deliver up the key of the corn-chamber. He saw that Mr. Black suspected him of dishonesty, because everything was now weighed and measured out. The very turnips seemed to be counted. The man was changed, and for the worse. Black saw it with much concern, and often meditated a friendly talk to him; but Matthew was very short with his master, and confined his remarks to farm business. Tom was proud of displaying the key, and for some time his conversation would lead nowhere but to the chamber of wealth over which he now presided. Jack and Joe saw this, and winked at each other whilst leading the too-willing Tom to his favourite theme; so that the family had for some time only one staple of talk, viz. Tom’s key. Jack and Joe vowed they would purloin it when Tom was asleep, so the key had a soft warm bed under his pillow for many a night. One morning, entering the corn-loft, he could not find a sack he had flung over the weighing-machine the night before. It was a new sack, marked ‘J. M., Redesdale Mill.’ It belonged to the miller, and Tom expected him to call every minute. As he was vainly hunting for the sack he heard Jack whistling outside.

‘I say, Jack,’ bawled Tom from the top of the stairs, ‘have you taken a sack out of the corn-chamber?’
‘A sack? Not I! How could I, you know? You won’t let a fellow even mount the stairs and squint through the key-hole!’ And Jack went whistling away.

Presently Joe’s merry face appeared.

‘I say, Joe?’

‘Well?’

'Have you taken a sack out of the corn-chamber? I have lost a sack—a new one, one of old Martin's. Come, there's a good fellow, have you got it?'

'O yes,' said Joe. 'I was cold in bed last night, and I wanted an extra blanket; you'll find it on my bed.'

'No, Joe, don't be an ass; but tell me, have you seen the sack?'

'Yes, I should think so, often.'

'No, but, Joe,' pursued the puzzled Tom, 'have you seen the sack this morning?'

Joe only made faces, and Jack coming back they both laughed so heartily at Tom's woe-begone face, that he fell into a violent passion, and vowed as he locked the door he would go and tell his father.

In a little while Black's loud commanding tones were heard, 'Now, lads, have you taken this sack?'

'No, father, of course not,' said Jack; 'how could we?'

'Why, Tom says you are always teasing him with threats of mischief, and he says if you don't drop it he will give up the key.'

'We were only having a bit of fun with Tom,' said Joe. 'He is such a big man, and so fond of showing off, that we aggravate him a bit, to keep him in his place. That is all.'

'And you know nothing about the sack?'

'Nothing at all.'

Black and the three lads now went up into the chamber, and made a thorough search, but no new sack was there.

'Are you quite sure, Tom, Martin did not call for it before?'

'Quite sure, father.'

'Have you missed anything else?'

'Well, father, to tell you the honest truth, I do believe some corn has gone.'

'Why did you not tell me this before?'

'Because I did not find it out till yesterday, and I could not believe it. But here is the account I have kept. And I reckon there is a sackful short.'

Black studied for some time Tom's rough accounts, and he became sure that Tom was about right. He went to his breakfast with but little appetite. Matthew was still robbing him, but how had he got into the chamber?

Mary Still added to the perplexities of the household by giving notice after breakfast that she meant to leave that day month. She had been so long at the place, and had become so useful to her mistress, that her loss appeared a serious one. But no entreaties would change her opinions. She quietly resisted such offers as Mrs. Black thought might have tempted the lord mayor. Go she would, that day four weeks. Black thought she might be thinking of marriage; but then, where was the beau? She had neither aged father nor mother to live with and support. Her departure struck him as a mystery, but after all it might be nothing more than a sudden freak. Mrs. Black sounded Mary, by offering to give her a good character if one was needed; but Mary on her part gave evasive answers, seemed to have lost her old frankness, and turned from the subject as soon as she could.

'John,' said Mrs. Black, 'there's something wrong with Mary.'

'Ah, lass, there's something wrong with other folks, too. The corn-chamber has been opened again, and we've lost a sack and some corn.'

'Oh, the lads have been pranking to tease Tom.'

'No, they haven't. They solemnly declare they haven't even touched the key. No, there's mischief somewhere. By-the-by, Kate, have you ever suspected anything wrong between Matthew and Mary?'

'Wrong? what can you mean? What sort of wrong?'

'Well, do you know I sometimes fancy they are better friends than they ought to be.'

'Indeed! I never suspected anything—how should I? Mat I never much liked, as you know,—I always thought him sly; but you also know you never would hear a word against him. He was Prince in name and a prince in your esteem.'

'Ah, Kate, I was wrong. Matthew has deceived me.'

Black then told the story, which he had not yet told, of Matthew's dishonesty.

'Do you think,' said his wife, 'any one could have taken the key out of Tom's room?'

'No, unless it was taken from under his pillow. Mary could hardly do that, and put it back again without waking Tom. It is possible Matthew has another key to the door, of course.'

'Could he get in by the window?'

'Ah! I never thought of that. I will go and examine it.'

But the window was securely fastened inside, and ancient cobwebs were thickly spun over and about it. It had not been opened for years. No, the thief had evidently come through the door with a false key. Tom vowed he would find him out, and wipe off the stain upon his trust. So he watched many nights, but saw and heard nothing. One night, not feeling very well, he was absent from his post, and on that night some corn was taken. Thus Tom felt he was watched as well as watcher. It was not a comfortable feeling at all. It was very provoking, and when Tom stood the next night watching the black outline of the barn gable against a sky nearly as dark, a sort of chilly terror crept over him. The villain might shoot him dead at his post.

CHAPTER VII.

THERE was an auction going on at Redesdale. The valuable furniture and other effects of Mr. Matthew Prince were going under the hammer. Matthew was selling off, and then, Westward ho! That famous auctioneer, Mr. Land, was honoured with the job, and did it in his usual effective style. A year had now passed since the stacks were burnt, and the finker was round again. He attended the sale, and bought a lot of old oddments, which he thought might be useful. An ancient kettle with some equally venerable pans, a pair of battered candlesticks, two or three lids which did not fit the pans, and so forth. As the lot was knocked down to him for 'an old song,' he thought himself in luck's way that morning.

(To be continued.)

SPRING SONG.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX.'

The flow'rs are in blos - som, The cuck-oo will soon De-light ev'-ry heart with his . .

The first system of musical notation for 'Spring Song'. It consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The melody in the treble staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and a quarter rest. The lyrics 'The flow'rs are in blos - som, The cuck-oo will soon De-light ev'-ry heart with his . .' are written below the treble staff.

song; The woods in sweet con-cert Will e-cho the tune, To which so ma - ny raptures be-

The second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note F#4, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and a quarter rest. The lyrics 'song; The woods in sweet con-cert Will e-cho the tune, To which so ma - ny raptures be-' are written below the treble staff.

- long. The fields clad with ver - dure, The mea-dows so gay, The val-leys that smile all a -

The third system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note D5, followed by eighth notes C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, and a quarter rest. The lyrics '- long. The fields clad with ver - dure, The mea-dows so gay, The val-leys that smile all a -' are written below the treble staff.

- round, In tones so en - dear - ing, In - vi - ting - ly say To the woods, to the woods let us

The fourth system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note E5, followed by eighth notes D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a quarter rest. The lyrics '- round, In tones so en - dear - ing, In - vi - ting - ly say To the woods, to the woods let us' are written below the treble staff.

bound . . In tones so en-dear - ing, In - vi - ting - ly say, To the woods, to the woods let us

The fifth system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note F#4, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and a quarter rest. The lyrics 'bound . . In tones so en-dear - ing, In - vi - ting - ly say, To the woods, to the woods let us' are written below the treble staff.

bound.

The sixth system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and a quarter rest. The lyrics 'bound.' are written below the treble staff.

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Spring. By W. H. Boot.

SPRING SONG.

THE flowers are in blossom, the cuckoo will soon
 Delight every heart with his song;
 The woods in sweet concert will echo the tune
 To which so many raptures belong.
 The fields clad with verdure, the meadows so gay,
 The valleys that smile all around,
 In tones so endearing invitingly say,
 To the woods, to the woods, let us bound!
 List, list to the herald of summer! he sings
 With voice so melodious and clear;
 Glad tidings the cuckoo to all of us brings,
 He tells us that summer is near.
 Then away, then away, to the greenwood, and hail
 The song of the forest and grove;
 Where vigour and health are restored in the gale
 That returns with the season of love.

THE PORTER'S MISTAKE.

ALEXANDER, the late Emperor of Russia, was remarkable for his affable disposition. His attachment to his tutor, La Harpe, was rather that of a son than of a pupil. One day he went to visit La Harpe, as was his custom, alone; the porter was a new servant, and did not know him: he asked his name, and was answered, Alexander. The porter then led him into the servants' hall, told him his master was at his studies, and could not be disturbed for an hour. The servants' homely meal was prepared, and the prince was invited to partake of it, which he did without affectation. When the hour was expired, the porter informed La Harpe that a young man of the name of Alexander had been waiting some time, and wanted to see him. 'Show him in.' But what was La Harpe's surprise to see his pupil! He wished to apologise; but Alexander, placing his finger on his lips, said, 'My dear tutor, do not mention it; an hour to you is worth a day to me; and, besides, I have had a hearty breakfast with your servants, which I should have lost had I been admitted to you when I first came.' The poor porter's feelings may be better imagined than described; but Alexander, laughing, said, 'I like you the better for it; you are an honest servant, and there are a hundred rubels to convince you that I think so.'

BETTER THINGS.

BETTER to smell the violet cool, than sip the
 glowing wine;
 Better to hark a hidden brook, than watch a diamond
 shine.
 Better the love of gentle heart, than beauty's favours
 proud;
 Better the rose's living seed, than roses in a crowd.
 Better to love in loneliness, than bask in love all day;
 Better the fountain in the heart, than the fountain by
 the way.
 Better be fed by mother's hand, than eat alone at will.
 Better to trust in God than say, 'My goods my store-
 house fill.'

Better to be a little wise, than in knowledge to abound;
 Better to teach a child, than toil to fill perfection's
 round.

Better sit at a master's feet, than thrill a listening
 State;

Better suspect that thou art proud, than be sure that
 thou art great.

Better to walk the realm unseen, than watch the
 hour's event;

Better the 'Well done!' at the last, than the air with
 shoutings rent.

Better to have a quiet grief, than a hurrying delight;
 Better the twilight of the dawn, than the noonday
 burning bright.

Better a death when work is done, than earth's most
 favoured birth;

Better a child in God's great house, than the king of
 all the earth.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

STORIES OF SIEGES.

THE SIEGE OF WITTENBERG.



It is as 'Luther's town,' the place where he lived and taught, that Wittenberg is chiefly known to most people. Hardly a year after he had been laid to rest in the Castle Church there, the town of Wittenberg passed through some sad days. That was in the spring of A.D. 1547. The bells of its many steeples were silent; there was no sound of

merry voices in the streets, and the citizens looked grave and mournful. So still was the once busy city, the far-famed university, the capital of the Electorate of Saxony, and residence of the Prince Elector, that the distant murmur of the Elbe river as it flowed by on the western side of the town could be heard in the streets. Only the ramparts around were astir with armed men, and the gunners stood by their cannon.

It was the calm before a storm,—for all around in the valley of the Elbe, as far as eye could reach, lay the armies of Charles V., lord of half the civilised world, and Wittenberg was every moment expecting to hear the thunder of his siege artillery. Times had changed, you perceive, since the days of the siege of Solothurn;* for gunpowder had been invented, and great guns were now used to batter the walls of besieged places.

The Elector of Saxony, John Frederick, had joined a league of Princes against the Emperor Charles V. of Germany, to protect his subjects who had adopted the reformed religion; but he had been defeated and made captive in the battle of Mühlberg, and now he was a prisoner in the Emperor's camp, while his wife, the Electress, as Regent, was conducting the defence of his town of Wittenberg.

In one of the principal streets of the town stood a

* Described in *Chatterbox* 1871 (page 341).

quaint old house; like all its neighbours, it had high pointed gables, but it was more highly decorated than the rest by carved stone balconies, and curious devices in wood-carving along the dark beams on its front; it was a corner-house and had a turret at the corner, with pointed roof, and supports of carved stonework. This turret formed inside a little octagon chamber, with windows in three sides; and in this room there sat a venerable-looking man of about seventy, dressed in a long robe with a narrow border of fur, and a small black-velvet cap on his white hair. He was sitting at an easel painting, and seemed quite absorbed in his work. All round the room hung pictures; other unframed ones stood with their faces to the wall, and one large one, before which hung a curtain, filled up one of the eight sides of the little room.

There were voices at the foot of the stairs, and a woman's shrill tones could be distinctly heard.

'Is Master Lucas in?'

'Yes, of course, Herr Bürgermeister, he is always in. He never stirs from his painting; not even to-day, when every one is gone to the Town Hall to hear the news. No, Wittenberg may be taken ten times over for what *he* cares!'

The man's voice which spoke in reply was not clearly heard above; but an instant afterwards, Frau Elsbeth, the old painter's housekeeper, ushered a visitor into the turret-chamber,—another white-headed man, wearing an embroidered leather doublet, ruff, and gold chain, such as marked a wealthy citizen of his day. He was the 'Bürgermeister,' or mayor of Wittenberg, a post which had also been held in former years by his friend, Master Lucas Kranach, one of the most famous painters of his time.

'You have not heard the news, Master Lucas?' said the Bürgermeister, as the painter greeted him in an absent sort of way, still never taking his eyes from his work.

'What news, friend Eisenhuber?'

'Why, the Emperor has had our Elector tried by court-martial, and condemned to death.'

Lucas Kranach started from his seat.

'That cannot be!' he exclaimed. 'The Emperor has no right to do that. The Elector, as a Prince of the Empire, can only be tried by his peers, the College of Electors.'

'We all know that,' replied Eisenhuber sadly, 'but that does not alter the matter. A court-martial of Spanish officers has condemned our Prince, and whether the Emperor has the right or not, he certainly has the power to execute the sentence. He sent a message to the Electress this morning, telling her that unless she surrenders Wittenberg at once, her husband shall be beheaded within sight of the town walls; and now messengers are passing to and fro between the camp and the city. I have just come from the palace, and I heard there that a letter had arrived from the Elector to his wife, praying her on no account to surrender; that he was willing to die, and would scorn to purchase life by giving up the liberties of his people.'

'That is just like him; we might have known it would be so. Alas, my dear master!' burst forth the old painter, now giving way to the greatest distress.

For many years, indeed since the boyhood of the Elector, a strong friendship had existed between him and Lucas Kranach. Many an hour had the Prince spent in admiring the skill of the painter, and watching the beautiful forms which awoke on his canvas. Together, too, they had listened to Divine truths from the lips of Luther, and held converse on the things which he taught them. Ah! it was no indifference to the fate of his friend and master which kept old Master Lucas at his easel, when all the town was seeking news; rather he had sought refuge in his art from the sad and anxious thoughts which filled his mind.

The Bürgermeister and he talked for awhile longer about the terrible news: then Eisenhuber, about to take his leave, stepped in front of the easel.

'How beautiful!' he exclaimed. The subject of the painting was St. Stephen before the council; and the artist had been trying to represent the face, which looking on the Unseen, from out of the midst of earthly troubles, became 'as the face of an angel.'

'Ah, my St. Stephen has beguiled me from many sad thoughts since this ill-fated war began,' said the painter.

'And what is this?' asked his friend, going up to the curtained picture, after a glance at the portraits of Luther and Melancthon taken from life, which he had seen before.

Master Lucas drew aside the curtain. It was a picture of the Crucifixion; and among the figures standing at the foot of the Cross the artist had introduced a likeness of himself.

'It is the altar-piece for Weimar,' he said; 'it cannot be sent there till the war is over; meanwhile I keep it, and shall miss it sorely when it goes.'

After Eisenhuber had taken his leave, Master Lucas remained standing for some time before his picture. When at last he replaced the curtain and turned away, his face was no longer sad, and he calmly returned to his work.

Next day, the Emperor's siege artillery, which had lately arrived in the camp, opened fire, and a storm of iron crashed against the walls of Wittenberg; the guns on the ramparts replied, and the city was deafened with the uproar. But those who could judge of such things, said that Wittenberg might bid defiance to the enemy for a long time. Suddenly, towards evening, however, the firing ceased, and the following morning the news was passed from mouth to mouth that the town had surrendered to the Emperor. His cruel and crafty scheme for gaining possession of it easily had succeeded; for the Electress was less influenced by the exhortations of her husband to hold out at all hazards, than by the messages of the Emperor, telling her that the Elector's life depended on her surrendering.

She had been sorely perplexed and nearly distracted between the two; but her woman's heart had decided at last. And thus it fell out that the siege was a very short one, and that Wittenberg, unconquered, opened her gates to the foe.

The news reached the turret studio, and Master Lucas hardly knew whether to rejoice that his master's life was saved, or to grieve that the town had been given up.

(Concluded in our next.)

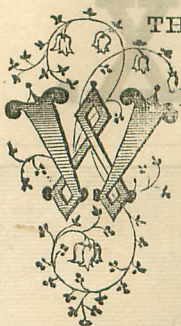


LUCAS KRANACH started from his seat.

Chatterbox.



Tinker Jim and Tom Black.



THE CHANGED LETTER.

(Continued from page 163.)

ELL, Tinker Jim,' said Tom Black, 'we thought you were dead. Where have you been?'

'Oh, seeing the world for nothing, as usual. But how's poor Charley?'

'Charley? Well, I don't know; but pretty well I believe, considering.'

'Yes—considering I've been often considering.'

'Considering what?'

'Considering as how the boy was scragged unlawful. Charley never lit the lucifer as set fire to that stack.'

'Well, I don't know,' answered Tom: 'he had a fair trial: the magistrates, the police, and the jury all thought so; and if they were wrong, why are you so wise?'

'Police!' said the irreverent tinker. 'They've no more in their noodles than this kettle!'

With that Tinker Jim shook the kettle, which immediately gave him the lie, for it certainly had something inside that rattled.

'Why,' said the tinker, 'I've got sommat else in with my precious lot! I hope it's a guinea, but I don't expect it till I see it. No, it's nobbut an old key.'

The tinker took it out, and was going to put it into his pocket, when it caught Tom's eye.

'Wait a moment, Tinker Jim; let's have a look at that key.'

'Have a look? why, you're welcome to it, if you like—leastwise I'll give it you for a glass of your beer.'

'Done!' said Tom, pocketing the key; 'and you may call for the beer to-day.'

Tom had been struck with the resemblance which the key found in the kettle bore to the sacred key which slept every night under his pillow; and when he reached home, he thought he would try whether his new purchase would open the granary. Of course it would. It opened the door better than his own key opened it, for it was particularly well oiled.

'Father,' said Tom, soon after, 'I've made a discovery.'

'What's that, my lad?'

'I've found a key that will open the corn-chamber,' said Tom; 'and where do you think I found it?'

'In a stone wall, maybe.'

'No. I bought it at Matthew's sale.'

'At Matthew's sale? What dost mean, my lad?'

'I mean what I say. The key was sold, inside an old kettle, to Tinker Jim, and he let me have it for a glass of beer. It looked so-like my key, that I bought it out of curiosity, to see if it would fit the lock of the granary; and it does, like a glove!'

Black said no more, but walked away. 'O Mat, Mat, it's well thou'rt going to cross the ocean! What a downfall's thine! To rob thy old, old friend! Well, I must not know of this, and Tom must be secret. I must go and bid thee farewell for ever,

Mat! If thou dost not mend thy ways, we shall meet no more!' Black determined to say what he could to Matthew, before he sailed, about doing that which was right. So he called at Prince's cottage next day. That day week the family were to embark at Liverpool in the *Virginia* screw-steamer. Poor Mrs. Prince was very sad at the thought, but that was not her deepest grief. Black had not seen her lately, and he was surprised at her altered looks. 'Concealment, like a worm i' the bud,' preyed on her once blooming cheeks. She had no one to tell her sorrows to. She was not, unfortunately for her, a religious woman; she had not learned the art of casting all her care upon God; and so her pent-up griefs were consuming her spirit. Prince was ill-using her. He dared to lift up his hand against her, and she bore it with uncomplaining fortitude. The children were two neglected-looking girls, of eight and ten. Two boys, older than the girls, were out at service, and were to join their father next spring, if the venture turned out well.

'Well, Matthew, I hope the things sold to advantage?' said John Black, in his cheeriest tones.

'Yes, nothing to grumble at.'

'And I truly hope you will never have reason to repent leaving the old country.'

'Repent! I should think not.'

'Why, Mat, you speak bitterly. I used to think you were happy and contented. What's amiss? Something is amiss, I'm sure.'

'Amiss? there's plenty amiss. When a man's enemies blacken his character, he'd better be hanged like a worthless spaniel at once, or get out of the way. I don't fancy the hanging at present, so I'm going to vanish. Perhaps folks will let one alone over there.'

'Well, Mat,' said Black, 'come and see us before you go. It's this day week, isn't it? Come up and bring your wife, and Lizzie and Polly, here, and let's have a cup of comfort yet for auld lang syne. Let you and me part in friendship, Mat, for the sake of days and dear ones that are gone.'

Matthew gave a sort of half promise they would try and come, if they were not too busy; and John Black, feeling he had said all he could just then, went homeward with sorrow in his heart for the altered condition of his old friend and poor Rachel Prince, whom he remembered as the blitheest lass in the village in days gone by.

CHAPTER VIII.

'FATHER, here's a letter which the postman has just brought.'

Mr. Black took it from little Janet, and looked at it before and behind, as a man will when he does not know whence it comes. The postmark was Southampton.

'I don't know any one at Southampton,' thought Black, who was a thoroughly inland mid-shire man, and had rarely, if ever, been across the border of his own county. In fact, it is doubtful whether the worthy farmer knew where Southampton was. Nor was he very grand at reading writing; print he could manage pretty well if the words were not too long. Janet, therefore, proffered her services.

'Here, my lass, then read it, and let's see what's in it.'

So saying, John gave Janet the letter, and sat down to hear it read.

'Why, father,' exclaimed Janet, 'it's not for you!'

'Not for me, lass! what d'ye mean?'

'Why father, it begins, "My dearest Mary."'

'Well, but,' said Black, again taking up the envelope, it is directed to me, "Mr. John Black, Redesdale, near Granton, Flixtershire." Here, Janet lass, let me look at the letter.'

The surprise of Black cannot be described as he read as follows:—

'My dearest Mary,—
'*Spotted Dog, Flixter,*
'*Wednesday, Nov. 12.*

'I shall be in Southampton to-morrow morning. I leave this place by night mail. If Bradshaw is right the steamer will leave about noon on Friday. Meet me at Southampton railway station. I will look into the waiting-room after every train. I am hoping to be a happier man with you. I am only sorry now I got Charley Yates into trouble when I set fire to the stack. I don't think now he ever peached of me. Black must have seen me, somehow, and took away the key in consequence. Anyhow, he got served out. So no more till we meet. From yours ever, M. P.'

Black's face changed strangely as he stumbled through the note. Little Janet was in fear; she thought the letter must contain very dreadful news, and she expected her father would drop in a swoon.

'Janet, dear,' said he at length, 'do go and call your mother. Say I want her directly.'

Janet ran after her mother upstairs and downstairs, and into the larder and brewhouse, and found her at length among the chickens.

'Mother, do come! father's heard some bad news in a letter!'

'Bad news! What news? Who from?'

'I don't know; but it is a letter from Southampton, and begins, "My dearest Mary."'

'The child must be crazed,' thought Mrs. Black, as she hastened to the house. 'We know nobody at Southampton, and there isn't a Mary in the family.'

Soon Mrs. Black made her way into the presence of her puzzled husband.

'Now, John, what's this story about bad news in a letter?'

'Bad news and good, too,' said John. 'But most astonishing news. Read and see!'

Mrs. Black read the letter once, twice, thrice, before she spoke another word or stirred an inch.

'Now, John, what are you going to do?'

'I don't know.'

'You must do something, and quickly. You must not let that villain give the law the slip. Come, John, you must be off to Flixter at once, and get the police to telegraph to Southampton. Janet, fetch last week's *Granton Chronicle*, and look out the next train to Flixter. Come, Bessy, run upstairs and fetch your father's Sunday coat; and bring his hat down, too. Ann, take that pair of boots, and tell Reuben to clean them at once. He is digging among the currant-bushes. And, John, one of the lads should go with you to Flixter. Ten to one you will have to be off to Southampton. To think of Mat being such a villain, and Charles Yates innocent!

Well, I'm glad he didn't do it. I never liked Charles, and don't suppose I ever shall; but I am truly glad he never burnt his uncle's stack. His guilt was a disgrace on all of us. And Mary, too, do you think it means Mary Still? And how came Matthew, the villain! to put her letter into your envelope?'

'Oh, no doubt it was a mistake!' said Black. 'The wretched man is caught by his own negligence. I wonder what is in the letter he wrote to me?'

'Well, I suppose Mary Still is reading it; and if she's as guilty as he is, she is quaking in her shoes.'

Janet came running in with the paper. The train would leave Hedgethorpe in an hour. As Hedgethorpe was two miles off, Black had to make haste. He was off as soon as possible, and as he walked with Tom to the station, and flew in the train to Flixter, he had time to meditate on his important secret.

Arrived at Flixter, he made his way at once to the chief police station, and requested to see the superintendent on important business. Being brought into the presence of the chief, Black told the story in the simple straightforward manner of an English farmer. The superintendent well remembered the circumstances of the Redesdale fire, and the committal of Charley, and nodded his head at such parts of the story, intimating John might hasten onward, as time was flying and the prey might escape.

When the proper time arrived John produced the note, which the superintendent read.

'Ah! a strange way of getting oneself nabbed!'

With that a bell was touched, and a policeman appeared.

'Send for Mr. Rogers directly.'

In a few minutes Mr. Rogers appeared. He was a gentleman in plain clothes to look at, but those plain clothes concealed the sharpest detective out of London. 'Now, Mr. Black, tell your story to Mr. Rogers. But please, first describe this Matthew Prince, who was your labourer, was he not?'

Black described the well-known height, size, and likeness of his old friend, as far as he could, all which particulars were duly noted down.

The superintendent then communicated by telegram with the Southampton police, and John Black and the detective went off by the earliest train to that famous scaport; Tom being sent back to tell them at home what had occurred, and how Black was obliged to go to the end of England in the cause of justice, and would not be home again for two or three days.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE CHAFFINCH.

THE Chaffinch is a bonny bird,

A bonny bird is he;

He keeps his plumage clean and bright

As any bird we see;

You may know him by his 'Pink! pink! pink!'

In hedgerow, or in tree.

His lady-love makes no great show,

But quiet is and kind;

And when the Chaffinch is about

His mate's not far behind:

For in truth they are a loving pair

As any you shall find.

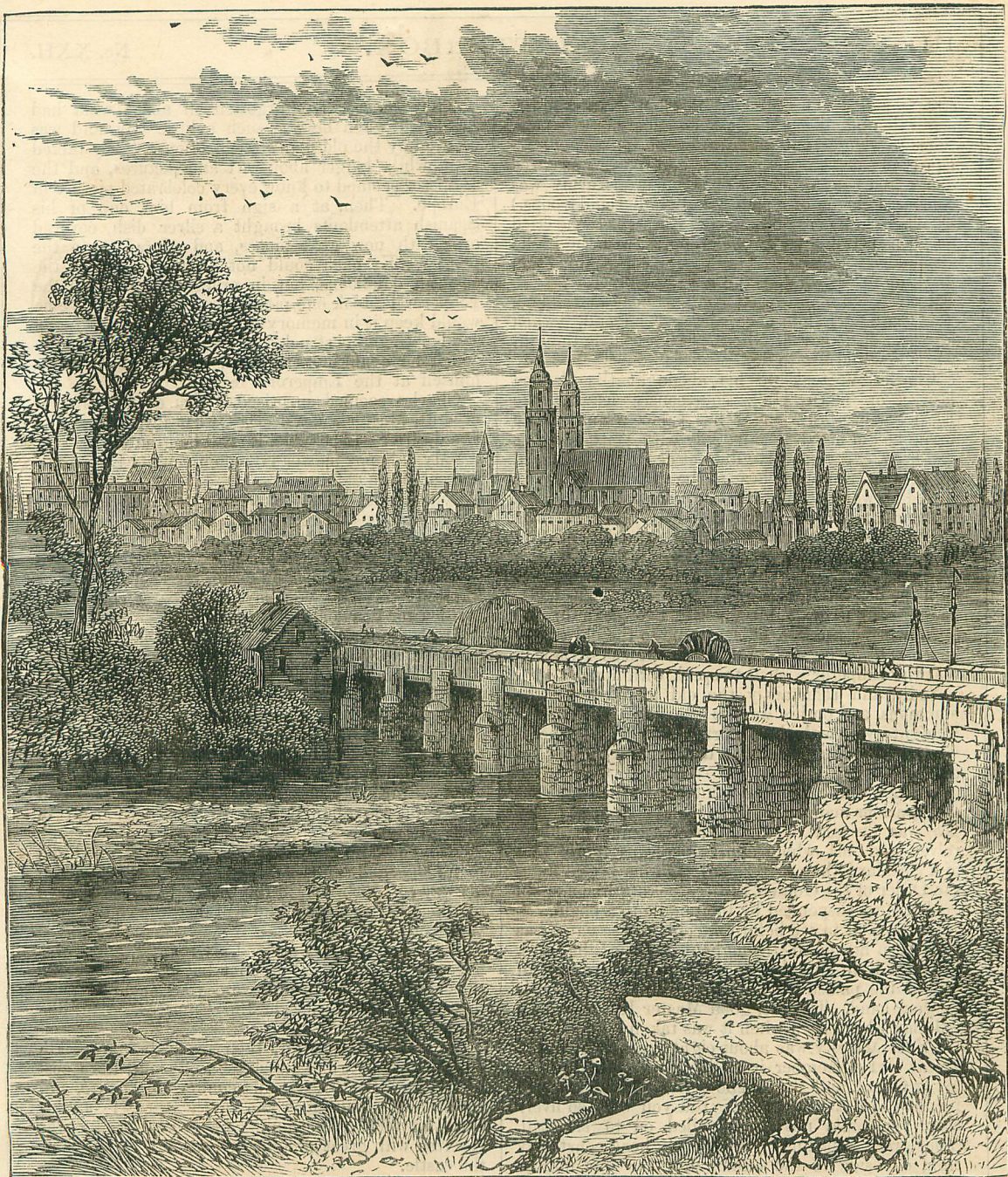


She lays her eggs in early spring,
 And patiently she sits;
 And proud, too, of her callow brood,
 As pussy of her kits:
 While Dick, he forages for all,
 And pipes to them by fits.
 And when the young ones are of age,
 And try their full-fledged wings,
 Young lambkins skipping o'er a knoll

Are not more happy things:
 And the field around with 'Pink! pink! pink!'
 In tones metallic rings.

I wish that all our little folk
 Were happy in the nest,
 That when they're scattered there might be
 No rancour in the breast:
 And that sweet might be the thought of HOME,
 Where'er they rove or rest.

D. G.



Wittenberg.

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Concluded from page 167.)

WHEN Charles V. made his entry in state as conqueror, Wittenberg was silent and mournful. The citizens could not welcome him who was the foe of their Prince and held him prisoner. The bells did not ring; the streets were deserted; the

houses were closed. I do not mean to say, however, that no one looked out of the windows: curiosity was too strong for that; and among others, Frau Elsbeth, Lucas Kranach's old housekeeper, was eager to see the sight, and marvelled greatly that her master would not so much as look out of his windows for the sake of it.

The turret chamber commanded a view of two

streets, and Frau Elsbeth was allowed to take her stand there, and could not keep back her exclamations of wonder and admiration at the splendidly-equipped Spanish troops, horse and foot, who poured along past the corner. (The Emperor's army was composed chiefly of Spanish and Netherland troops.)

'There he comes! there is the Emperor!' she cried out, 'on such a beautiful black horse, with the bridle all studded with jewels! Oh, Master Lucas, won't you just step to the window and see the Emperor?'

But the old man turned away his head and sighed.

'I have seen him once already,' he said, 'when he was a little boy at Ghent. Ah! I little thought what he would live to do.'

Charles V. took up his abode at the Council House, or Town Hall, courteously leaving the Electress in possession of her palace; and on the whole he did not deal so harshly with Wittenberg as had been expected. He did not cause the reformed services in the churches to be stopped, as many feared he would: and when he went to see Luther's tomb in the Castle Church, and the Duke of Alba and other fierce Spaniards at his side desired that he would have the body of the heretic taken up and burnt, he answered, 'I make war with the living, not with the dead. Let him rest in peace.'

The conqueror had been but two days in the town, when a Spanish officer came to the old corner house with a message to Master Lucas Kranach, that the Emperor wished to speak with him.

Sadly and reluctantly the old man obeyed the summons, and on his way to the Town Hall all his thoughts were with the unfortunate Prince; who, it was said, had been sent to a distant land in hopeless captivity.

Charles V. received the painter with the courteous and gracious manner which he could assume at times. He was dressed in a Spanish costume of black velvet, and his whole appearance was more that of a Spaniard than a German. On his breast hung the Order of the Golden Fleece, looking like a small golden lamb suspended by the middle to a chain.

'I am glad to see before me one whose name has long been honoured throughout Europe,' he said. 'But we have met before. There is a portrait of me in the palace at Mechlin, which I believe is by your hand. Tell me, good Master Kranach, how old may I have been when it was taken?'

'Your Majesty was about eight years old,' replied Lucas. 'I remember it well. I was studying my art at Ghent, and the Archduchess Margaret* sent for me to paint your grace. But you were so lively that you could not be prevailed on to sit still. Your grace kept turning your curly head constantly from one side to the other: not for one minute would you allow the painter a steady look at your face. Then a gentleman, your grace's tutor, came in, and whispered to me, 'A moment's patience, I think I can help you. The little prince is very fond of fine new arrows.' And an attendant came and held up an arrow against the wall, a beautifully painted one, and your grace's eyes flew to it at once, and I was able to take the likeness.'

* Margaret of Austria, Charles's aunt, who superintended his education in the Netherlands.

The Emperor had forgotten all about what had happened when he was such a little boy, and was amused by the old man's recollections. They talked for a while longer about art and pictures, and the Emperor seemed to know every celebrated picture in Europe. Then, at a sign from him, one of his Spanish attendants brought a silver dish, covered over with new gold pieces, and offered it to the painter. Kranach could not bear the sight of the Spanish doubloons, but in order not to offend the Emperor he took one piece from the dish, saying he would keep it in memory of this interview. Then a sudden thought struck him, and with an impulse which he could not restrain, the old man threw himself at the Emperor's feet.

Charles seemed surprised. 'You do not care for my gift, Master Lucas. Say, what favour is it that you desire? If possible, it shall be granted.'

'My unhappy master's freedom, mighty Emperor!' entreated the old man.

But Charles V. turned away. 'The imprisonment of the Elector of Saxony is at present needful to the peace of Europe, of which I am the guardian,' he said, somewhat coldly. 'But rise, Master Lucas, and say, is there anything you desire for yourself or your kindred? Would you have a place at court, or a pension for your old days?'

'I need nothing, Lord Emperor,' replied Kranach. 'I have no family; and for myself—my art has supplied me with a sufficient support for my old age: and I am well-nigh weary now of my pilgrimage, and desire no change but that to a better world. Yet there is one favour I would fain ask of your majesty. Grant me permission to share the captivity of my good lord, wherever he may be.'

The Emperor was touched, rarely as his cold and crafty nature allowed him to show any sign of feeling.

'Do you know what you are asking, good old man?' he said. 'The Prince Elector is at present on his way to Innsbruck, in the Tyrol. You will have to take a long journey, and will miss the comforts of your home.'

But Master Lucas pressed his request, and it was granted him. 'I would that but one among the thousands who serve me were your equal in true-hearted faithfulness,' said the Emperor, as he dismissed him.

And the old painter, then in his seventy-sixth year, did really go to Innsbruck. It must have cost him not a little to leave his comfortable house, and his favourite painting-room in the turret; but his easel he took with him. At Innsbruck, he was received with great delight by the lonely prisoner in the castle.

'I should not have believed such a joy could have been granted me by that heart of steel,' said the Elector, when he heard what had passed, 'as to let such a friend share my solitude and trouble.'

Master Lucas cheered the seven years' captivity of his friend and master with his faithful companionship and the pleasures of his art, and together they often read the sacred words which Luther had put into German for them.

Lucas Kranach was eighty-three years old when freedom came at last to the Elector. And when the

glad day arrived on which he made his entry into Wittenberg, all the town was in a tumult of joy at his return, and the people streamed out of the gates to meet him, bearing green boughs in their hands, and there sat by the Prince's side in the carriage a white-headed old man, whose face beamed with joy, and one said to the other, 'That is our good Master Lucas, who was so true and faithful to his lord.'

A. F. G.

AN ORIENTAL JUDGE.

IN *Notes from Nineveh* there are some curious things related, not the least curious of which is the following solution of a puzzling problem:—

A certain merchant left in his last will and testament seventeen horses to be divided among his three sons, according to the following proportions, namely: The first was to receive one half, the second one third, and the youngest one ninth part of the whole. But when they came to arrange about the division, it was found that to comply with the terms of the will without sacrificing one or more of the animals was impossible.

Puzzled in the extreme, they repaired to the Cadi, who, having read the will, said that such a difficult question required time for deliberation, and recommended them to return in two days. When they again made their appearance the judge said:—

'I have considered your case, and find that I can make such a division of the seventeen horses among you as will give each more than his strict share, and yet not one of the animals shall be injured. Are you content?'

'We are, O Cadi!' was the reply.

'Bring forth the seventeen horses, and let them be placed in the court-yard,' said the Cadi.

The animals were brought in, and the Cadi ordered the groom to place his own horse with them.

He then bade the eldest brother to count the horses.

'There are eighteen in number, O Cadi!' he said.

'I will now make the division,' responded the Cadi. 'You, the eldest, are entitled to half; then take nine horses. You, the second son, are to receive one third; take, therefore, six; while to you, the youngest, belongs the ninth part—namely, two. Thus the seventeen horses are divided among you; you have each more than your share, and I may now take my own steed back again.'

'O Cadi!' said the brothers, 'your wisdom equals that of our Lord Solieman!'

THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

UPON a time a neighing steed,
Who grazed among a numerous breed,
With mutiny had fired the train,
And spread dissension through the plain.
On matters that concerned the state
The council met in grand debate.
A colt, whose eye-balls flamed with ire,
Elate with strength and youthful fire,
In haste stepped forth before the rest,
And thus the listening throng addressed:

'Alas! how abject is our race,
Condemned to slavery and disgrace!
Shall we our servitude retain,
Because our sires have borne the chain?
Consider, friends, your strength and might
'Tis conquest to assert your right.
How cumbrous is the gilded coach!
The pride of man is our reproach.
Were we designed for daily toil,
To drag the ploughshare through the soil,
To sweat in harness on the road,
To groan beneath the carrier's load?
How feeble are the two-legged kind!
What force is in our nerves combined!
Shall then our nobler jaws submit
To foam and champ the galling bit?
Shall haughty man my back bestride?
Shall the sharp spur provoke my side?
Forbid it, friends! Reject the rein;
Your shame, your infamy disdain.
Let him the lion first control,
And still the tiger's famished growl.
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name.'

A general nod approved the cause,
And all the circle neighed applause.

When, lo! with grave and solemn pace,
A steed advanced before the race,
With age and long experience wise;
Around he cast his thoughtful eyes,
And to the murmurs of his train
Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain:

'When I had health and strength, like you,
The toils of servitude I knew.
Now grateful man rewards my pains,
And gives me all these wide domains.
At will I crop the year's increase;
My latter life is rest and peace.
I grant to man we lend our pains,
Help him to cultivate the plains;
But doth not he divide the care,
Through all the labours of the year?
How many thousand structures rise
To fence us from inclement skies?
For us he bears the sultry day,
And stores up all our winter's hay.
He sows, he reaps the harvest's grain;
We share the toil, and share the gain.
Since every creature was decreed
To serve each other's mutual need,
Appease your discontented mind,
And act the part by Heaven assigned.

The tumult ceased. The colt submitted,
And, like his ancestors, was bitted.

Gay's Fables.

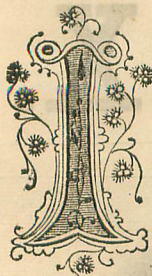


Council of Horses. By HARRISON WEIR.

Chatterbox.



Frank and Matoonga. By E. FITZPATRICK.



MATOONGA.

KNOW that there are many good nursemaids in England, but I defy any mother of a family to find one who can take care of her children and do more for them than did my good and faithful black Matoonga with my little boy Frank.

When Frank was not many weeks old, his nursemaid, a black girl, who gave me a great deal of trouble, came into my room one

morning, and 'gave warning' in these words:—

'If you please, marm, my ma says, please, marm, I may go, marm.'

'Oh, indeed! go where?' I asked.

'Go home, marm, please marm, and not come any more days, please marm.'

'Very well,' I said; 'get me a good strong boy to nurse baby and you may go home. I'll have no more naughty girls like you.'

'Oh, thank you, marm. I've got a big boy; such a good boy, in the garden, marm, and he nurses baby so nice, and marm will like him.'

'Well,' I thought, 'this is very prompt business indeed,' and I walked out on the verandah, feeling rather cross, I must confess; but at the sight I saw all feelings but one of pleasure vanished, for there sat, or rather sprawled, on the ground a great fellow with big strong limbs, and a shining, good-tempered face, with the very largest mouth I think I ever saw, nursing my child, and amusing him in a way that quite won my heart. I soon made him understand, that if he took care of baby I should be very kind to him, that I should give him six shillings a month and some clean shirts, which must never be dirty.

When baby's father came home he cross-questioned the lad, and talked to him for some time. He then told me how fortunate I was, and that I had engaged one of the best kind of Zulu Kafirs. And so he proved to be. He was with us nearly three years, only leaving us for a few weeks now and then, as the very best Kafirs will, to visit their kraals—their homes far away in the country.

Matoonga quickly learnt to speak English, and very proud he was in teaching baby to say his first words; he taught him to walk, too; he washed and dressed him in the morning; he cooked his food for him and fed him; carried him out under a white umbrella to see all that was to be seen, brought him home asleep, put him carefully to bed, came away on tiptoe; danced off snapping his fingers to wash the clothes; washed them, laughing and talking to his friends—he was generally surrounded with three or four—hung them out to dry—the clothes, not the friends—made his porridge, ate it, and was ready for Frank as soon as that young fellow was ready for him. Then they would go away again for the whole afternoon, coming back just at the right time, so happy and full of glee, when baby was disposed of for the night (Matoonga always got him to sleep). My good nurse-boy was always ready and willing to help the other Kafirs, get tea ready, take the horse when his master arrived; or he would

fold the clothes, make them into a parcel and stamp them, which is our method of mangling—and a funny one it is. I've seen three Kafirs stamping the same package (about a yard square, securely stitched or pinned in a thick wrapper), stamping furiously, flinging their arms wildly in the air, and singing one of their queer thrilling songs. I've seen them stop, quite out of breath and exhausted, wiping the perspiration off their faces.

When Frank grew older and slept in another room, Matoonga did what I never heard of another Kafir doing—left his hut, where the Kafirs all sleep together like so many sardines in a box, and without a grumble took up his quarters on the floor of Frank's room. Any one who has lived in Africa will understand the sacrifice he made, for Kafirs hate sleeping by themselves. However, every night, when he had had his supper and taken his snuff, and talked himself hoarse, in he walked with his mat and blanket under his arm, and his pillow in his hand; not a soft feather pillow, but a hard block of wood about the size of a brick. I used to peep in the last thing to see if all was safe and sound, but there was never so much of Matoonga to be seen as a hair of his woolly head. Wrapped up tightly in his blanket, and tucked up in the most wonderful manner, he looked like a huge chrysalis or mummy out of the British Museum. And didn't he snore!

My little boy was very fond of him; he would put his fat white arms round Matoonga's black neck, and kiss his black face over and over again. They had a sad parting. When the ship arrived to take Frank to England, Matoonga would scarcely let any one touch him, nor let him go away out of his sight; and when (after going in a boat to the steamer), Matoonga carried him down into the cabin and saw the tiny beds like shelves in a cupboard, he was quite angry, and declared that we could never sleep there; that Frank would die; and why didn't I buy better beds? Then he cried in great grief, '*Maye, maye!*' I gave him a present at the last; he didn't thank me as usual, but said, '*Mena itanda amali inkosikagi;*' which means, 'I don't want money, lady; '*mena tanda* (I want) Frank, oh, *mena tanda* (I want) Frank!' However, he took the money, poor Matoonga! and with it he would buy (together with his wages) oxen, and with the oxen he would buy a wife, and then, perhaps, he would never do any more work; for Kafirs make their wives do all their work, and the more wives they have, and children, the richer they are.

Matoonga said, if Frank grew up into a great *inkosi* (master or chief), and came back in a ship, then he, Matoonga, should come and work for him again.

My little boy prays 'God bless him' every day. He was a good, faithful fellow, and I cannot remember one occasion when I had to reprove him during the three years he was in my service. Stay: once I was displeased with him. Frank cried for some sugar on his bread and butter, and I said No, he was not to have any. When my back was turned Matoonga gave him some, which I found out by the crying suddenly coming to an end. When I scolded Matoonga he was very high and

mighty, looked straight over my head, and told me that it was not good for Frank to cry for such a trifle. I reasoned with him, however, and he soon saw that he had done wrong, so that afterwards I entirely trusted him.

One day he told me that his mother had come and was waiting to look at me. I went out on the verandah, and there stood Matoonga's mother dressed in a blanket, with a basket of mealies on her head. She was not bashful about looking at me, for she stared for a long time, turning to Matoonga every now and then to express her approval and admiration of my dress, my hair, and so on. I, on my part, took a close survey of her, and sketched her afterwards, to Matoonga's great delight. It was with great difficulty that we persuaded him to sit for his photograph with baby on his knee; he quite thought they would be hurt, for when the artist disappeared under the cloth, and the round end of the camera was presented to his view, and he was told to look at it, he darted from his seat, and claspings Frank in his arms was quickly out of sight. He was caught and brought back, and a tolerably good likeness was taken, though we could not persuade him to smile and show his teeth.

I have not done Matoonga justice in my description, but I wish that Christian people knew what good ground there is in the simple Kafir nature for the seed of the Gospel to be sown, and how it often brings forth much fruit in what seems an unlikely soil.

A. R. B. S.

MISS GREENE'S TIP.

CHAPTER I.



SHE is a brick!' exclaimed Duncan Wells, as he watched a carriage drive off from the hall-door, and waved his hand to a lady who was sitting in it. 'This sovereign is exactly what I wanted. I have saved up my tips for a whole year, but they have come in awfully slow, and till now I hadn't got enough.'

'Enough for what?' asked Katie, his youngest sister.

'Don't you know, Kate,' said Frank, 'that Duncan has set his heart on a watch in Keller's

window, with a ticket on it, "Price three pounds fifteen shillings?"'

'Three pounds fifteen shillings!' cried Clara, a young lady just set free from the schoolroom, and having a very high opinion of herself. 'Just as if anybody could get a watch worth having for three pounds fifteen shillings!'

'It's all very well for you, Clara; you have got your godmother's gold watch, and think yourself very grand, but everybody hasn't got a godmother.'

'Oh, Frank, everybody has!' said Kate; 'or, at least, they had some time or other.'

'Well, then, if you must be so particular, every godmother doesn't leave a gold watch to her god-child.'

'Perhaps not,' said Clara; 'but I think you will be throwing away your savings and Miss Greene's tip if you buy a rubbishing watch.'

'I don't see why you should think it is rubbishing,' said Duncan. 'Stone, the gardener, showed me one he got at Keller's which has gone capitally, and he didn't give as much for his.'

'What are you going to do with your sovereign, Frank?' said Kate. 'I can't tell anybody what I am going to do with mine.'

This reserve on Kate's part was, perhaps, rather unnecessary, as all the family knew that every penny she could scrape together was being put by for presents, to be sent out to her father and mother, who were in India. The first thought that came into her mind was that Miss Greene's tip would help to send something to the baby sister also, whom she had never seen.

'You needn't tell us, Kate. We know what your craze is,' said Clara. 'For my part, I don't suppose father and mother want presents. If we write to them by every mail they are satisfied.'

Duncan was still throwing up the sovereign and catching it.

'She might as well have made it one pound five shillings,' he said, after a bit.

'Why, just now you thought one pound very handsome, and now you are beginning to want more!' said Frank.

'Well, because she changed a five-pound note this morning. I know that, because I took it to Graves's and brought her the change; and five shillings more each would just have made up the sum, and it would have been very useful.'

'Most likely she wanted the change for her ticket, and all sorts of things. I think it really is a shame not to be satisfied,' said Kate.

'So do I,' echoed Frank. 'I know I am. I feel as jolly as a sandboy.'

These four young people were the children of an Indian officer, and had been for some years inmates of a Vicarage on the south-west coast of England. Mr. and Mrs. Graham had also some children of their own, and the two families were growing up together. The boys only came to Wanborough for their holidays, but the girls were educated there by a governess, and Clara, the eldest, was looking forward to going out to India in a few months. They had some few relations in England, and also some friends of their father's and mother's families. Among these last was the Miss Greene, who from time to time came to see them, and who on this occasion had, as we have seen, given each of them 'a tip' as they called it. Kate was quite right in thinking she might want her change. She was not at all rich, and for a long time she had been contriving to spare the gift for her friends' children. In giving it she begged them to spend it usefully; but the joy of receiving it somewhat dulled their sense of what she was saying, and they would willingly have promised any impossible thing at such a supreme moment.

'Come along, Frank, let's get out,' said Duncan, and the two boys ran to get their hats. At the same moment Arthur Graham, a boy of seven, came out of another room and begged to go with them, as usual. It was a great delight to the little Grahams when



The Boys on the Sea-shore.

these elder brothers, as they seemed to be, came home.

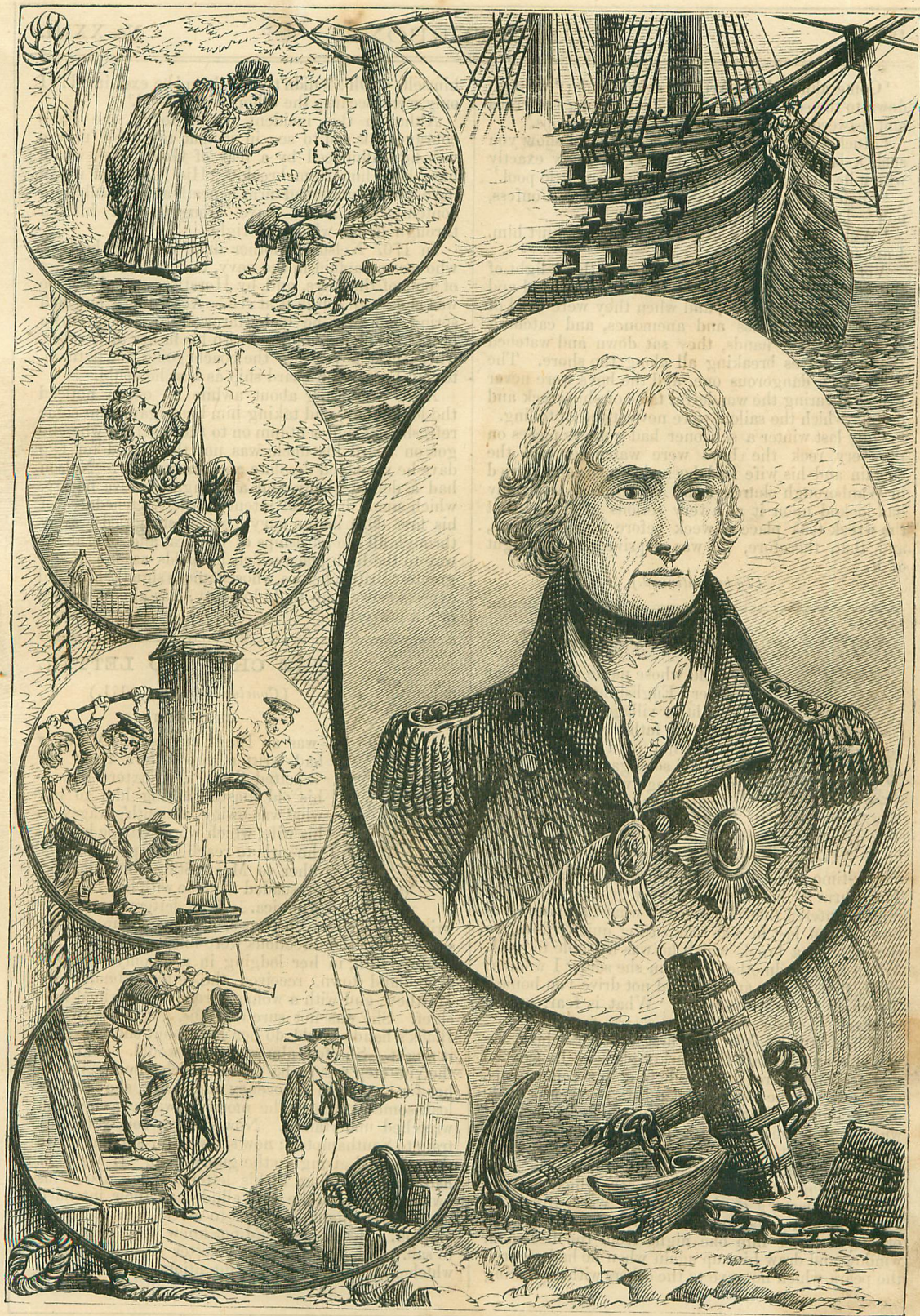
'No, Arthur, you can't come, we are busy,' said Duncan.

'Oh, Duncan!' said Frank, 'why mayn't he come? I have not got anything to do, and I don't believe you have.'

'All right! you needn't believe it: so you can take Arthur for a walk, and I'll go down into the town.'

'You won't go to Keller's to-day, shall you?' said Frank, who was divided between fear and admiration of his brother's brave project of settling his own affairs without any advice from Mr. Graham.

Duncan gave a look at Arthur, to show Frank that he had no intention of taking him into his confidence; and then putting his hands into his pockets, and whistling with an air of satisfaction, he walked off in the direction of the town.



Horatio Nelson.

'Come along then, Arthur,' said Frank; 'we'll go down to the sea. It is much jollier among the crabs and seaweed than in the town among the shops.'

'Much jollier!' said Arthur. 'And I'll show you such a beautiful anemone, Frank. I know exactly where he is sticking, and it's such a clear little pool.'

'Then you've been bullying him, Arthur? Confess, now. Didn't you stir him up?'

'Well, I did—just a little. But I didn't hurt him. I am sure of that.'

Very soon the two boys were lost in the delight of the rocks and pools of the sea-shore. The wind and the tide were rising too, and when they were tired of poking up the crabs and anemones, and catching shrimps in their hands, they sat down and watched the great waves breaking all along the shore. The coast was a dangerous one, and the boys were never tired of hearing the wonderful tales of shipwreck and danger which the sailors were never tired of telling.

Only last winter a schooner had gone to pieces on the very rock the boys were watching, and the captain and his wife had been drowned, and buried in Wanborough churchyard. And Duncan especially had looked upon it as a very serious grievance that the wreck took place a week before he came home, and that, therefore, he was deprived of the sight of it.

(To be continued.)

HORATIO NELSON.



THE child whose name now is dear to every English heart was born in a little village in Norfolk, of which his father was rector, and though not of a strong constitution he soon gave proofs of that great courage which marked his future career.

When very young Horatio strayed from his home in the company of a cow-boy, and when dinner-time came he could not be found anywhere. The alarm of his family was very great; all sorts of fancies entered their minds as to what had become of him; but at last he was seen sitting quietly down by the edge of a brook which he was not able to cross. When his grandmother saw him she said, 'I wonder, child, that hunger and fear did not drive you home!' To which Horatio answered, 'What is fear, grandmother? I never saw it.'

When little Nelson was first sent to school, he would try to get into the market-place as he went to and fro, and there, with the help of his companions, work away at the pump until a little pond was made deep enough to float a tiny vessel which he had cut with his own knife, and rigged with a paper sail.

Horatio went next to a larger school, in company with his brother William. While there, the boys were longing to take some ripe pears which grew in the schoolmaster's garden, but they were afraid; so Horatio volunteered to plunder the tree, and got the others to lower him one night from the bed-room window and draw him up again when he had secured the pears, which he gave to the others without tasting

himself. 'Oh! I didn't want them,' he exclaimed: 'I only went because the others were afraid.'

Although this incident proves to us the boy's courage, it is sad to see in it that his noble nature was not influenced by a fear of God, which would have kept him from breaking His laws, and would have made him stand firm beneath any ridicule and contempt he might have brought upon himself through doing what was right.

In 1767 Nelson's mother died, and her brother, who was a captain in the navy, undertook the charge of one of the boys, and by Horatio's own desire he was chosen to rough it at sea. Accordingly one cold spring morning he bade farewell to his favourite brother William, and went with his father to London, where he was put into the coach going to Chatam, to find his way on board ship as best he could.

After wandering about awhile an officer noticed the lonely boy, and taking him home gave him some refreshment and sent him on to the ship; but when he got on board his uncle was not there, and for two days he remained desolate and uncared-for. Nelson had a delicate body and a loving, sensitive nature, which made him feel intensely the wretchedness of his first days in the navy; but he struggled bravely through all the hardships of the sea, and fought his way to the high place which he holds as one of our greatest British heroes, whose famous signal, 'England expects every man to do his duty,' has almost passed into a proverb.

M. F. S.

THE CHANGED LETTER.

(Concluded from page 171.)

CHAPTER IX.



IT was as Black supposed. Matthew had written two letters from the 'Spotted Dog' at Flixter—one to his old master, asking him to pay what was owing, a month's wages, to his wife, which would enable her and the girls to reach Liverpool, and the other to Mary Still, whom he had persuaded to elope with him to South America. The letters were both written, placed in envelopes, and sealed up, but by some means the directions were misplaced.

Mary Still, in her lodging in a gloomy suburb of a midland town, received the letter intended for Matthew, and with a woman's ready wit divined mischief. She was not sure that the letter now in Mr. Black's hands would do her harm, but she suspected it might. She felt almost sure it would. And now the vile step was to be taken, which would separate her for ever from innocence and peace, she felt how loathsome it was. The morning was consumed in wretched uncertainty. Now she was for taking the train to Southampton; now she was for staying where she was, and giving up the guilty plan. If Matthew had said anything in his letter to her about his own misdoings, if he had alluded to their intended flight, steps might be taken to arrest him at Southampton. Besides, she did not know when they were to sail. She had received a letter six days ago, in which Matthew stated his intention to leave South-

ampton about the middle of November, but whether he had altered his mind, or where he was to be found, she knew not.

After a long consideration, during which she sat with her head in her hands, she decided to go down to Southampton and take the chance of meeting Matthew at the station or quay. If she did not meet him she did not much care; and if she did meet him she would tell him that she had given up all thoughts of going with him out of the country. But she was so long in making up her mind that Matthew looked for her in the Southampton waiting-rooms in vain. There were people of all sorts arriving and departing, but no Mary. He was very unwilling to go without her, especially as she had lately had a legacy from an old aunt to add to her savings. So Matthew lingered at the station when he would gladly have been off.

As he was watching the arrivals by a train, a hand was laid upon his shoulder. He had been pointed out to the detective by John Black. Matthew turned round, hoping that Mary had arrived by another train, and that the hand which touched him was hers.

Turning round he met the gaze of an unknown man.

'Mr. Matthew Prince, I must speak with you, if you please.'

'Sir,' said Matthew, much surprised and staggered at any one knowing his name so far from Redesdale, 'I cannot think you have any business with me.'

'I have, sir, indeed, some most important business with you,' said the unknown; 'and I shall be obliged by your stepping with me into yonder private room.'

Matthew hesitated; it flashed across his mind all was not right, but, putting the best face on the matter, he accompanied the detective to a door which he pointed out.

'Your name is Matthew Prince, is it not?'

'It is.'

'Then you are my prisoner.'

'Your prisoner! Why? On what charge? Who are you?' gasped the thunderstruck fugitive.

'I am a detective police-officer from Flixter, and I have a warrant to apprehend Matthew Prince on a charge of stack-burning at Redesdale.'

Matthew's heart sank within him, and he said not a word. Had Mary turned faithless? If so, she should feel his vengeance (for a rogue's affection soon curdles into hatred). They should know what part she had in it. Did she not take the lad's boots out of his room—the boots with which the footprints were made? She had not come to Southampton,—of course not! she set the bloodhounds on him. And now he was caught,—just as he was about to enjoy life and freedom. With such thoughts in his breast the unhappy man was carried away whither he would not, and lodged in Flixter gaol.

That same evening Mary arrived at Southampton. She lodged at a little inn near the docks, and spent the next two or three days in looking for Matthew, but he never appeared; she then moved her quarters into a small lodging, where she lived a long time. Anxious to learn what had happened to Matthew, she obtained the *Flixter Journal* through the agent at the bookstall, and she there found (and oh, how she

trembled as she read!) he had been apprehended at that very railway station the afternoon she arrived. She read, with fearfulness and concern, the account of his trial and conviction. She felt she ought to be punished, too, but she dared not then go and make her confession. She thought that her reparation to the injured boy should take another shape. She would work hard and live a most frugal life, and leave all her earnings to Charley. She felt so glad he was now free again; and she reasoned in her own imperfect way, that though she owed a debt to the law which she dared not pay, she would benefit Charley more by working her fingers off to make him a rich man, than by expiating her share of the incendiarism in a prison. Thus Mary Still argued. For many years she continued to labour as a dress-maker in Southampton.

Charley was of course liberated, and he carried with him from the Reformatory a very high character.

Mr. Inghu was determined to have a demonstration on his return to the village. Not only were the bells rung, and a big bonfire lighted, but the clergyman received him with open arms, and declared publicly he adopted him as his own son. He had visited the Reformatory several times during Charley's confinement, and was overjoyed to find his poor prisoner, in whose guilt he never could believe, was conducting himself so well.

The day before Charley was to return Mr. Inghu had a long interview with the Blacks, and the result was that the clergyman made an adopted child of the orphan. John Black had plenty of sons and daughters whilst the Rector was childless; and, moreover, considering all that had occurred, Mr. Inghu thought both Charley and his relatives might be happier apart. It was therefore decided that the boy should henceforth live at the Rectory, and be known as Charles Yates Inghu.

He was sent to Rugby, and thence to Cambridge. His school and college career was passed honourably. Mr. Inghu had not much worldly gear to bequeath to him, and it was therefore a pleasant surprise when Charles Yates, Esq., one 'gaudy summer morn,' opened a letter with a deep black border round it, which informed him that Miss Mary Still, spinster, was dead, and had left him the sum of 1360*l.* in the three per cents, as some reparation for wrongs which she had done him long ago.

SNOW IN THE BALL-ROOM.

THE following anecdote is told by Professor Dove, of Berlin, in illustration of the production of snow by change of temperature. On an extremely cold night, a large company had assembled in a ball-room in Sweden, which in the course of the evening became so warm that some of the ladies fainted. An officer tried to open a window, but found it was frozen to the sill. He then broke a pane of glass, and the rush of cold air from without produced a fall of snow in the room. Its atmosphere was charged with vapour, which, becoming suddenly condensed and frozen, fell in the form of snow upon the astonished dancers.—*From the World of Wonders.*



The Detective arresting Matthew Prince.

Parts I. II. III. IV. and V. for January, February, March, April, and May, 1875, are now ready, price Threepence each.

Chatterbox.



A Dog's Pity. By HARRISON WEIR.



A DOG'S PITY.

AN interesting anecdote was lately told in the *Cornhill Magazine*. It was related of a large dog kept in Algiers by Miss Emily Napier, daughter of Sir William Napier. This dog was sent every morning to fetch bread from the baker's, and regularly brought home twelve rolls in a basket. After a time it was observed that for several mornings there were only eleven rolls in the basket, and on watching the dog he was found to stop on his way and bestow one roll on a poor, sick, and starving dog, hidden with her puppies in a corner, on the road from the shop. The baker was then instructed to put thirteen rolls in the basket, after which the dog delivered the twelve faithfully for a few days, and then left all the thirteen in the basket—a token, as it proved, that his sick friend was convalescent, and able to dispense with his charity.

GEORGE NIDIVER.

MEN have done brave deeds, and bards have sung them well:

I of good George Nidiver now the tale will tell:—

In Californian mountains a hunter bold was he;
Keen his eye, and sure his aim, as any you should see.

A little Indian boy followed him everywhere,
Eager to share the hunter's joy, the hunter's meal to share.

And when the bird or deer fell by the hunter's skill,
The boy was always near to help with right good will.

One day, as through the cleft between two mountains
steep,
Shut in both right and left, their searching way they
keep,

They see two grizzly bears, with hunger fierce and fell,
Rush at them unawares, right down the narrow dell.

The boy turned round with screams, and ran with
terror wild:

One of the pair of savage beasts pursued the shrieking
child.

The hunter raised his gun, he knew *one* charge was
all,
And through the boy's pursuing foe he sent his only
ball.

The other on George Nidiver came on with dreadful
pace:

The hunter stood unarmed, and met him face to face.

I say *unarmed* he stood, against those frightful paws;
The rifle-butt, or club of wood, could stand no more
than straws.

George Nidiver stood still and looked him in the face:
The wild beast stopped amazed, then came with slack-
ening pace.

Still firm the hunter stood, although his heart beat
high;
Again the creature stopped and gazed with wondering
eye.

The hunter met his gaze, nor yet an inch gave way;
The bear turned slowly round and slowly moved away.

What thoughts were in his mind it would be hard to
spell:

What thoughts were in George Nidiver I rather guess
than tell:

But sure that rifle's aim, swift choice of generous part,
Showed in its passing gleam the depths of a brave
heart.—*Laurie's Technical Reading-book.*

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Continued from page 175.)

JELLALABAD AND THE ILLUSTRIOUS
GARRISON.



THE siege we have now come to belongs to the history of our own country, although the scene of it lies many hundred miles away.

If you look at the map of Asia, you will see to the north-west of British India a country called Afghanistan, or Cabool. It is a wild, mountainous land, inhabited by a warlike people called Affghans. In this country lies the town of Jellalabad, on the right bank of the Cabool river, with a strip of swampy grass-land between it and the river, and rough, broken ground on the other three sides.

On the evening of the 12th of November, 1841, a small British force entered this town, consisting of one English regiment (the 13th Light Infantry), one regiment of Native Infantry (Indians, commanded by English officers), and some cavalry and artillery. It was the brigade commanded by Sir Robert Sale. They were weary and foot-sore, hungry, and short of provisions and ammunition; and swarms of Affghan enemies, eager to destroy them, were on their track. But before we go on, it must first shortly be explained how they came there.

The English had (perhaps foolishly, as some people thought) undertaken to restore to the throne of Cabool an unpopular prince, who had been driven from it by an usurper named Dost Mohammed. This Dost Mohammed, commonly called by the English at that time 'the Dust,' was very unfriendly to British rule in India, and it was thought that it would be a good thing to drive him away. So the English marched an army right into the centre of the country and took possession of the capital town. 'The Dust' was made prisoner, and at first all seemed to go well. But after they had been there awhile, and thought themselves secure, Akber Khan, the son of Dost Mohammed, began to stir up the people of the country against them, and to assemble great numbers of his followers in the mountain-ranges which lay between the English army and British India, from which it had come.

It was just at this time that Sale's brigade was sent off from the main army to go back to India. They were attacked in the mountain-passes by the Affghans, and had great difficulty in fighting their way through, and getting out into the valley where Jellalabad lies.

They knew it was useless to go on, for they were six hundred miles from their own frontier, and on their way they would have to pass great mountain-ranges, where the enemy could easily destroy them. The only thing to be done, therefore, was to defend themselves in Jellalabad. So they marched in, as has just been said, and the native population fled out at one side as they entered at the other.

The name Jellalabad means 'Abode of Splendour,' and the English were rather disappointed to find that the place did not at all answer to its name. It was a walled town, but the walls were all in ruins, and there was no ditch. The houses were wretched, and chiefly built of mud; and as the town had formerly been much larger than it now was, there were old walls and ruins of forts and temples all around it, which made most convenient shelter for an attacking enemy. Altogether, there could not have been a much worse place to be besieged in.

Meantime, the Affghans who had attacked them in the mountains were coming on fast, and the first thing to think of was to be ready for them. There was no time to repair the walls; but what do you think they did? They took the saddles off all the camels that had carried their baggage, and piled them one upon another so as to fill up all the gaps in the wall. These camel-saddles are made of thick pads of straw, covered with stout sacking, and were a very good protection. Still the wall was not high enough for the sentries to stand behind it in safety; they had to kneel down so as not to be seen by the enemy.

This work was hardly finished when the Affghans were upon them. Large masses of them were seen coming from the mountains, and over the plain in all directions, till about 6000 were assembled round Jellalabad. All that day the garrison kept them off by firing from behind the camel-saddles, and at sunrise the next morning (the second morning after occupying the town), General Sale sent out a few hundred men to try and drive them off from a little rocky hill near the town of which they had taken possession. The English had a good hard fight for the hill, but at last gained it, and the soldiers from that time called it Piper's Hill, because the Affghans on the hill had a piper with them, who always kept in front, playing a thing something like a Scotch bag-pipe.

The enemy were dispersed and quite beaten off for the present; and now the English had time to prepare for a regular siege. They got in some provisions from the country round, found some ammunition which the natives had left in the town, and then the principal thing to be done was to rebuild the walls.

This they did by pulling down the clay houses inside the town, and using the hard clay as building material. From daybreak to sunset all, officers and men alike, worked hard at this, keeping a sharp look-out all the time on the Affghans who were

prowling about, and taking shots at the town when they could. Another thing which had to be done was to clear away all the ruins outside the walls: and working-parties were sent out every day for this purpose. It was slow work breaking down the old walls with spade and pick; and gunpowder for blowing them up could not be spared. But one of the officers hit upon another way of doing the thing.

One night about twelve o'clock there was a tremendous report, like the firing of a heavy gun, which seemed to come from the direction where the enemy were. The 'alarm' was sounded at once, and in two minutes every one was at his post on the walls. Sir Robert Sale and his staff went to one of the gates of the town, and stood there peering out into the darkness, expecting to see the Affghans coming on. At last one officer declared that he saw two dark columns of men close upon them. 'Here they come, sir!' he called out. And then every one thought they saw them; all but one—a Captain Seaton—who burst out laughing.

'Well, Seaton, what is it, sir?' called out Sir Robert in his short, sharp way.

'General, where is the back wall of the old fort?'

'Eh, eh—what—what?'

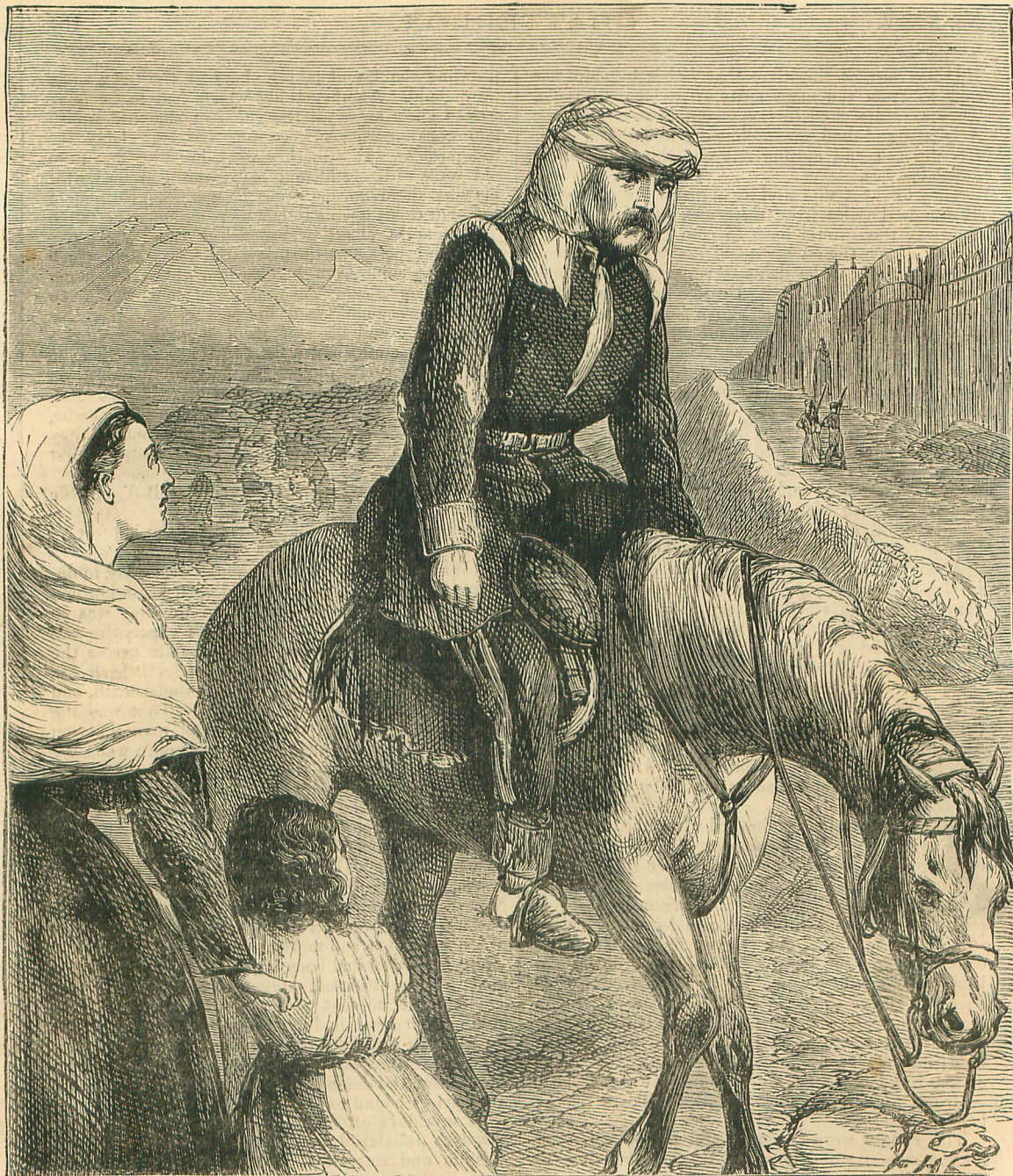
'Why, General, you sent me out yesterday to destroy the back wall of that old fort, behind which the enemy used to assemble, and the clay was so hard we could do very little with it; so, as the wall was just over a sunk road, I threw a dam across the lower part of the road, and we turned a little stream into it. It has softened the bank underneath, and the wall has fallen into the water. That was the sound we heard, and the columns of men that you see are the shadows of the north and south walls.'

After this, Captain Seaton was often sent out to practise the same tactics against other old ruins.

By the time the walls were finished the Affghans had assembled in great numbers. They surrounded the town, and cut off supplies, and kept up a perpetual fire from Piper's Hill. So another sally had to be made, and after a good deal of hard fighting they were again driven back.

Thus things went on till the beginning of January, when some very bad news arrived at Jellalabad. The army in Cabool had been surrounded by the enemy, and had capitulated. General Elphinstone, who commanded it, sent a letter to Sir Robert Sale, telling him what had happened, and ordering him to give up Jellalabad and retire. But as General Elphinstone was in the enemy's power when he wrote this letter, the defenders of Jellalabad did not think themselves bound to obey it.

A few days after this a solitary Englishman arrived at Jellalabad, he and his horse half dead from fatigue and starvation. When he was sufficiently recovered to speak, he had a fearful story to tell. His name was Dr. Brydon, and he had been with the Cabool army. When General Elphinstone capitulated to Akber Khan, he promised to leave the country at once with his army, and Akber, on his part, promised to let him go unmolested. But on their way through the mountains, in a deep narrow gorge called the Khoorch Cabool Pass, the English army was attacked by swarms of Affghans, who fired down at them from the rocks on both sides, and blocked

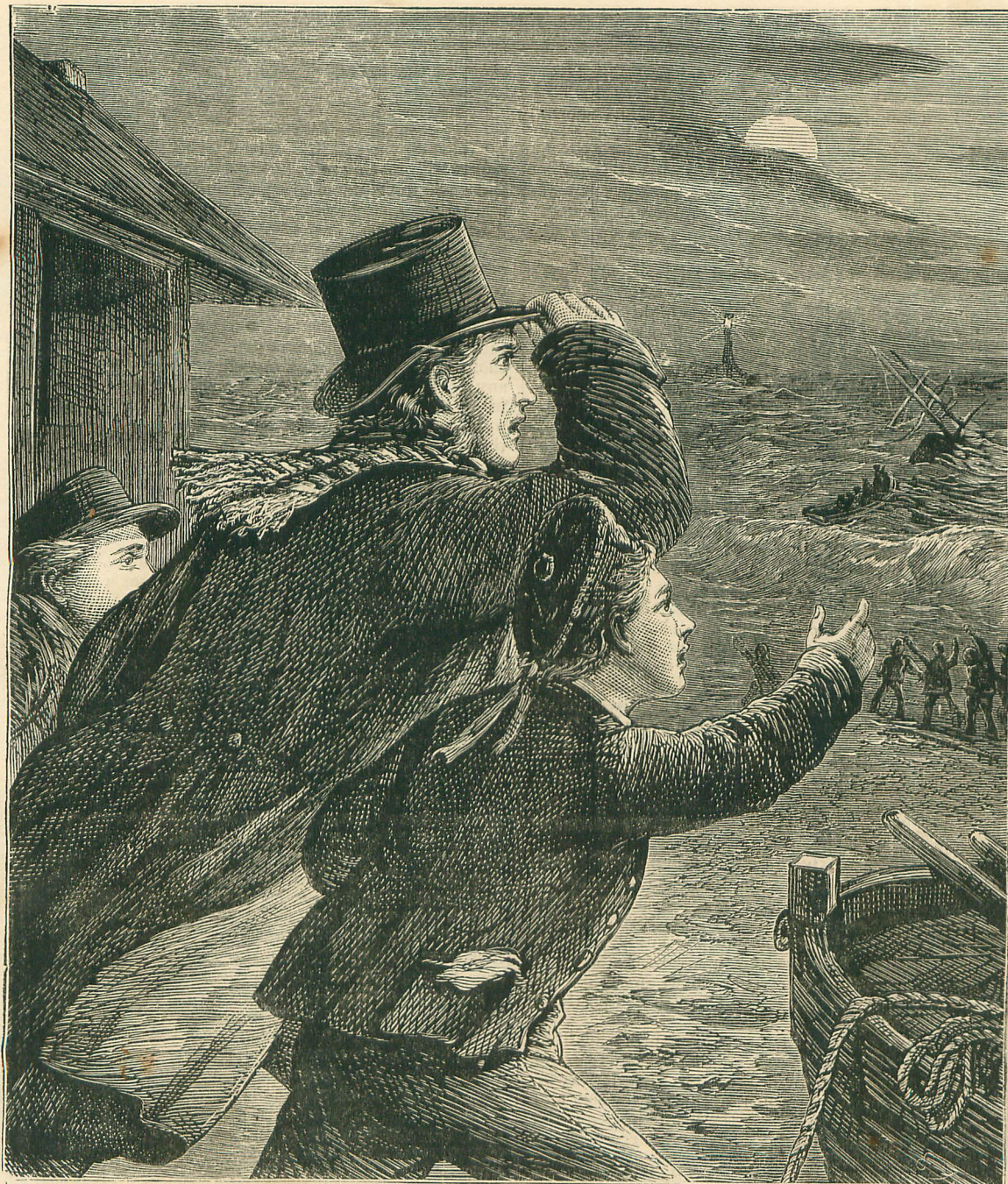


The Englishman arriving at Jellalabad.

up the pass in front to prevent their getting through. There was no way of escape, and none of the English left that fatal pass alive except a few mounted officers. Of these, Dr. Brydon was the only one who reached Jellalabad alive. Cavalry was sent out to look for the others, and the bodies of three of them were found a few miles off. Thinking that some poor fugitives might still be wandering about who might take refuge in Jellalabad, the garrison hoisted a flag,

and at night hung out lights above the town gate, and every quarter of an hour bugles were blown, that any Englishman who was within hearing might know where to come for safety. The wailing sound of the bugles going on through the night sounded very melancholy, like a dirge for our slaughtered soldiers. But of the Cabool army, none were left to hear it. Dr. Brydon was the only survivor.

(O mcluded in our nest.)



Mr. Graham and the Boys running down to the shore.

MISS GREENE'S TIP.

(Continued from page 182.)

CHAPTER II.

IT is a terrific night!' said Mr. Graham, looking into the sitting-room, as he passed through the hall to take off his dripping coat. 'The children are all here, I hope?'

'Yes, all,' replied his wife; 'and the tea is only waiting for you.'

'I hoped it was ready,' he said, 'for I must go out again in a few minutes.'

'What can he be going out again for?' asked Arthur.

'It is Saturday night, too,' said Clara. 'He hardly ever goes out on a Saturday night.'

'Some case of sickness, perhaps,' said Mrs. Graham. 'I only hope it is not far off.'

'I am sure I shouldn't go if it was,' said Duncan. 'I wouldn't be a clergyman, I know, to be sent for all over the parish just like—' And there he stopped.

'Just like what, Duncan?' asked Mrs. Graham.

'I was going to say, just like a servant; but of course it isn't quite that, because a servant must go where he is sent, and Mr. Graham can do as he likes.'

'You need not have stopped yourself, my boy,' said Mrs. Graham; 'a clergyman is a servant, and he must go where his Master sends him. They are all very anxious to know why you must go out again,' she added, as Mr. Graham came back and took his place.

'There is a vessel on the White Rock,' he replied, 'and there seems to be some doubt whether our lifeboat men can be got together. One or two are away, and I said I would be down on the shore in twenty minutes, to see if it would be necessary to telegraph to Newport for more hands. In the mean time they are getting her ready.'

'A ship on the rocks! oh, how jolly!' cried Frank.

'Frank, my boy! what are you saying? A shipwreck is a most awful thing!' said Mr. Graham.

Frank was greatly ashamed of his remark, and Duncan was glad that he had not expressed the same sentiment, though he fully shared it. All thoughts were centred on the great event of the probable shipwreck, and from time to time one and another started up to pull aside the shutters and look out into the thick darkness. The driving rain on the window-panes and the howling wind shut out all other sounds from the ears which were strained to catch the sound of guns and signals of distress.

'Do let me go, Mr. Graham,' cried both the boys at once, as the Vicar got up from his hasty meal. 'We really won't get in the way, and we should so like to go.'

A few moments before Mr. Graham would have most decidedly refused the request, but the remark of Frank, showing how little he realised the awfulness of the position of a ship on the White Rock, decided him to allow the boys to accompany him, if only for a short time. The rain was less violent, and from time to time the wind drove the clouds away from the face of the moon, and allowed her to shine fitfully over the raging sea.

In a few moments they were equipped, and little Arthur saw them start with longing eyes. He would have liked to make one of the party. As it was he went off to a bedroom which overlooked the sea, and sat there picturing to himself the White Rock and the ship, and peering into the darkness. Very soon he was joined by Kate. Clara was above showing any excitement or curiosity, and sat with Mrs. Graham, doing fancy needlework like a well-conducted young lady.

'Can you see anything, Arthur?' said Kate.

'Oh, lots! Do come here, and we'll watch together.'

'I don't see anything at all,' said Kate: 'what do you mean by "lots"?''

'Well, there's the lighthouse; you can see that, anyhow; and I really believe I see a light dancing

about on the waves. That's either the ship or the lifeboat.'

'There isn't a light at all!' said Kate, after vainly peering about in the darkness.

'What do you call that, then?' cried the boy, as a rocket with its trail of light went flying over the sea, and made the children grasp each other's hands and utter a cry of surprise.

But that was all they saw. The wind howled and whistled more and more wildly, and the servants had hunted them out, and brought them from their regions of romance and danger to the commonplace realities of tubs and soap and water.

In the meantime Mr. Graham, with a boy clinging to him on either side, was struggling down to the shore against the force of the wind, which prevented any of them from speaking a word till they were within shelter of the boat-house. The preparations were just completed, and the missing men were at their posts.

'Just off, sir!' shouted the men, as they ran the lifeboat down on her carriage, and braced themselves for their fearful struggle. A hearty cheer rolled along the shore as they sprang to their places, and were lifted high on the surf.

'Will they be in time, Matthew?' asked Mr. Graham of an old weather-beaten sailor, who was a great authority in nautical affairs.

'I doubt not, sir. She struck amidships, and the rocks is a driving into her like nails under a hammer.'

Just then the clouds lifted, and a cry of dismay ran along the beach as the ship was disclosed lying almost on her side, with heavy seas washing over her. Every now and then, too, the wind and the roar of the waves were lulled for a moment, and then could be heard the despairing cries of the poor people on the wreck. Duncan and Frank stood close together in utmost dismay. Nothing that they had ever read or pictured to themselves had given them the faintest idea of what a shipwreck really is, and they were for the moment quite unconscious of the wind and rain. Mr. Graham forgot them, too, in the excitement of preparations for the unhappy people who would probably be washed or brought ashore before the night was over. It was not the first time he had had to make such provision, and therefore he knew exactly how to set about it.

In the meantime the lifeboat was gallantly breasting the waves, and nearing the fatal rock. No help could be given by those on the shore. Rockets were fired, but the distance was too great, and they failed to reach the ship. And now, as once again the moon shone out, it was seen that the ship was breaking up. But the same gleam of light showed the lifeboat to be on her return journey, and two other boats were also struggling in her wake. The excitement became intense, and in a few more minutes willing hands were stretched out to assist the ill-fated passengers to shore, and the lifeboat was once more on her return journey.

One only of the other boats reached a safe landing-place. The other was capsized in the surf some way from the shore, and though several of its passengers were saved by the exertions of the boatmen, the greater part were lost.

It was an emigrant ship outward bound, and the

poor people who were being brought off, more dead than alive, had now lost everything, even the hope of doing better in a new country than they had done in England. Some of them seemed to care very little about their lives, and would have been content to reach an end of their sufferings.

CHAPTER III.

THE Sunday broke in the calm loveliness of a summer morning. The sky was unclouded, and the sea came up with a heavy, solemn swell, very different from its raging anger of last night. Little flecks of froth and foam lay about on the shore, and masses of seaweed were entangled with ship-timber, masts, and wreckage.

There was still a crowd on the shore, not now endeavouring to save life, but with a base desire for booty. Wanborough had emptied its worst haunts, and men and women stood about on the beach this Sunday morning, thinking little of the awful sight of yesterday, and still less of the bodies which lay in the lifeboat receiving-house, and of the souls which had gone to their account.

Mr. Graham had only returned to his house in the early morning, when nothing more could be done for living or dead; but he had sent the boys back some hours before, and though at first they felt as if they should never be able to sleep again, they had had a pretty good night.

When Frank woke in the morning it seemed to him that he had been dreaming all night. Now he was on the tops of the waves in the lifeboat, and now he was catching at some object in the water. It was only when he saw Duncan standing at the window, gazing out earnestly towards the sea, that he realised what had happened.

'I'm awfully stiff,' said Frank; 'I can hardly lift my arm.'

'So am I. It was hard work pulling at those ropes.'

'I should think it was hard,' replied Frank: 'they haven't left much skin on my palms, I know. I say, Duncan, did you see that woman's face—the first they took out of the boat, you know? I wonder whether those two poor little children belonged to her?'

'I don't know,' said Duncan. 'It doesn't matter. They'll be looked after.'

The boys came down to breakfast with an air of great importance. They were slightly wounded in the battle, and were proud of their scars, although it must be confessed that their assistance had been taken little account of by anybody but themselves.

To Arthur they appeared to be heroes of the first magnitude, and the questions which were asked them were bewildering and incessant.

'I say, one at a time!' exclaimed Duncan: 'the sea made row enough last night, but you all make ten times more.'

'Well then, Duncan,' said Arthur, 'do tell us. Was she a schooner or a brig? and did she have a pilot? and did she take the White Rock Lighthouse for Newport Point? and is the captain saved, or did he go down with the ship? and will he be washed ashore and buried by the other captain in the churchyard?'

'Oh, I say, Arthur,' said Frank 'how is a fellow to answer all that? And besides, don't you know that Mr. Graham sent us home before it was all over?' This was said in a slightly aggrieved tone of voice.

'My dear Frank, you were allowed to stay too long as it was. Do you know that when you came home you had not a dry thread upon you, and that you both looked as white as such brown boys can look? I intend to give Mr. Graham a little scolding for letting you stay as long as you did.'

'Where is he?' asked the boys.

'In his study, having a quiet breakfast. He says he trusts he may never again have such an awful night, and he wants some time to himself to think over his sermon this morning.'

(To be continued.)

THE MINER OF ANNABERG.

Translated from the German of Lüben.



SILVER is found in many mountains, yet nowhere in such quantities as in South America, where subterranean passages of solid silver have been discovered. The walls are of silver, from which the rain has washed away the sand. In olden times large pieces of silver were sometimes found in Germany. Once a block was discovered in Saxony, so large that the Elector and his courtiers could sit upon it and have their dinner.

The silver-mines of Annaberg were discovered by a poor miner, Daniel Knappe. He was a poor, pious man, who worked hard to support his family. They were often in want, and many a day he said to his hungry children, 'Have faith! we shall not starve.' One night, while tossing anxiously on his bed of straw, he thought a voice within him said, 'Be of good cheer.' The next morning he rose up earlier than usual, intending to do a long day's work and hoping to earn a few more pence. Alas! his work took him farther into the wood that morning, and he lost his way, and when the twilight set in he was just beginning his work.

He wept bitterly as he sat down on the stump of an old tree, and sad were his thoughts of his starving children at home. Again he fancied a voice within him say, 'Be of good cheer.' He stooped down to pick up his stick that he had dropped, and perceived something bright among the roots of the tree. Examining it closer he discovered it to be silver. He searched deeper, and discovered much of the same precious metal amongst the roots of the tree. Ah! from that day there was no more want and starvation in the miner's hut.

The town of Annaberg was quickly built near the mines, which proved very productive.

Silver is seldom found quite pure, generally it is intermixed with lead. Through smelting and different processes the precious ore is purified. It is a softer metal than gold, and to gain the requisite durability must be mixed with copper, which, however, does not lessen its brilliancy. Silver is not so flexible as gold, yet from one grain of silver 400 feet of wire can be made.



The Miner of Annaberg.

Chatterbox.



"Dear me, what rich children!" said Mrs. Graham.



MISS GREENE'S TIP.

(Continued from page 191.)

MR. GRAHAM is going to try to get the people to make a little fund for the unhappy creatures who have lost everything in the shipwreck. And of the ten who are drowned two are mothers, and the poor children are saved. Something must be done for them. The wives were going out to join their husbands in New Zealand. The ship was out of her course, and nobody knows yet whose fault it all is.

'Where are the little children?' asked Kate.

'Two of them are in the kitchen. Willis has given them some food, and has dried their clothes, which is all we can do for them at present.'

'And the others?' said Clara.

'The others are older, and are with the old Shaws till to-morrow, when we must settle what is to be done with them.'

'How many are saved altogether?'

'Between fifty and sixty, I believe; but some of them have already gone off to their friends, having some little money about them. Those who are left are quite penniless, and it is for them that the collection will be made this morning. I dare say you would all like to give, but I don't quite know how you are off for pocket-money.'

'I have got plenty,' said Kate, her castle in the air with regard to the present to the baby-sister falling to the ground.

'So have I! lots!' said Frank.

'I think your father would like you to give a little on such an occasion as this,' said Mrs. Graham; 'and if you have nothing to spare, Duncan and Clara, I can lend it to you.' Clara blushed and muttered something about having enough, but Duncan would be 'much obliged if Mrs. Graham would lend him half a crown, as he was rather hard up.'

For a few minutes the four, brothers and sisters, were left alone. Mrs. Graham went away to get the money, and Arthur followed her for his week's allowance, which he was very anxious to put into the offertory bag. The little Grahams had allowances as soon as they were old enough to go to church, in order that they might learn the true lesson of giving. They were not to offer of that which cost them nothing, but to deny themselves that they might have something of their very own to give.

'Did you really buy the watch then, Duncan?' said Clara.

'I've as good as bought it,' he replied. 'I went into the shop and asked about it. But he showed me a lot of others, and there's one at four pounds which is ever so much better. I think I'll wait till I can get that.'

'But Mrs. Graham thinks you have got no money,' said Frank.

'I don't care what she thinks; but she thinks quite right that I'm not going to spend my own money on nobody knows who.'

'But what's the good of giving money that isn't your own?' asked Kate.

'And pray, why isn't one half-crown as good as another?' said Duncan. 'If you'll just tell me that mine will buy more clothes or railway tickets than Mrs. Graham's, I'll give the subject my best consideration.'

'I must say I think the collection is rather a bore,' said Clara. 'I want a pair of earrings and a feather for my hat, and I must do without one of them if I give. But I hadn't the face to ask for money as you did, Duncan.'

'I didn't ask for it,' he replied: 'but I don't see why one should refuse a good offer.'

Frank and Kate both saw that there was a mistake somehow in Duncan's idea of almsgiving, but they did not see their way to an explanation of their views. It was impossible to deny that, as far as the shipwrecked people were concerned, one half-crown was, as Duncan had said, 'as good as another.' The loss then, they felt convinced, must be in some way to himself, and this notion they were quite sure he would ridicule.

'Have you written about your canoe, Frank?' said Duncan: 'it will be so jolly when you get it!'

At this moment Mrs. Graham returned with some silver in her hand.

'Here is your half-crown, Duncan. Would anybody else like some money?'

Clara would very much have liked to accept the offer, if it had not been for the previous conversation, but as it was Mrs. Graham took it for granted that she and the others had money of their own, and as they did not speak she returned the silver to her purse.

'I should like some change, please, if you have it,' said Frank.

'So should I,' said Kate.

'Dear me, what rich children!' said Mrs. Graham, as they each held out a sovereign.

'Miss Greene's tip,' explained Frank.

'Miss Greene! Poor thing, how kind of her!' said Mrs. Graham. 'She is supporting an invalid brother now out of her small means, and spends nothing on herself. But your mother was her dearest friend, and she knows what heavy expenses your father has, so of course she likes to give you a little present.'

For the moment, Duncan felt a twinge of conscience for having coveted a share of the remaining change out of the five-pound note; but this did not show itself in words, and he soon began to think of the delights of his watch, and to congratulate himself on his presence of mind in having begged the half-crown. For the moment the shipwreck had been uppermost in his thoughts, but now he retired to his room and once more counted out his available cash. The tempter must have already got some hold on him; for, for one instant he thought what a desirable addition the half-crown would be to his store, and considered as to whether an odd sixpence would not do for the church collection. Perhaps it was a glance at his mother's picture, perhaps it was the effect of her Sunday-morning prayer for him thousands of miles away, that made him shudder at the thought of such a sin.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. GRAHAM wished in his sermon of that morning to awaken some real charity in the hearts of the well-to-do people of Wanborough. They sat in their own seats, not to be intruded on by the poor people; they had talked of the shipwreck over their plentiful breakfast-tables; and some had, for curiosity's sake, taken a turn upon the beach, and given way to a little shuddering as they passed the boat-house where were lying, dank and wet, the bodies of the ship's passengers.

And, now in church, they hoped to hear some details of what had happened, as it was known that the Vicar had been working on the beach all night, and that he generally alluded to any special event in his sermon.

Few, however, were prepared for his appeal. He took his text from that chapter of the Acts of the Apostles which describes the shipwreck of St. Paul, and dwelt upon the kindness which even a 'barbarous' people showed the sufferers; who also honoured them with many honours, and when they departed laden them with such things as were necessary. And this hospitality they exercised for three months.

'And what are you prepared to do for those whom God in His providence has thrown upon your shores? The answer to this question must be given to Him, and the alms which are now to be offered will I trust prove that it is worthy to be the answer of a Christian congregation.' With these words Mr. Graham ended his earnest appeal.

Duncan had the half-crown which Mrs. Graham had given him in his hand. There was now no doubt in his mind as to his alms.

Clara had two coins in her pocket, a sixpence and a half-sovereign. More than once during the sermon she made up her mind to give the half-sovereign, and once she furtively looked at it to make sure of giving it. But, unluckily, Grace and Millicent Hervey, friends of Clara's, had that very day put on new hats and bright-coloured feathers; and Clara had visions of picnics and water-parties in which they would outshine her. The sixpence would not make much difference, but if she gave the half-sovereign she must go without the feather. And she decided that she could not go without it. So she gave the sixpence, and comforted herself with knowing that nobody was the wiser.

Frank had for a moment been puzzled by Mrs. Graham's words. If Miss Greene had really intended her present to be a help to their father, it was perhaps hardly right to give it away at once. It should perhaps go to pay for something which Major Wells must otherwise have paid for. But then, again, it was pocket-money; and pocket-money, by whomsoever given, was intended for amusement: so, after all, it was a question between keeping the money for amusement and giving it away.

'I will not offer unto the Lord of that which doth cost me nothing.' Those words in the sermon decided him; and he took out his sovereign from his purse and put it into the bag. He had not forgotten the face of the drowned woman the night before, nor the story of her little children. But it was not only that that decided him. There was an inner

voice saying to him, because he would listen to it, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto Me.'

He had to hand on the bag to Katie, but she shook her head. She had nothing to put into it.

'Shall I lend you some?' he whispered.

'No.' And again she shook her head and studied her Prayer-book.

Kate was a small person of great determination, and what Mrs. Graham had said had confirmed her in her intention of spending her whole fortune in presents to her mother and little sister. She could not see why anybody else had so much claim. And she stated her views so forcibly and clearly to Frank, that he began to be shaken in his. But it was not for long, and though he told nobody what he had given, he thought of his sovereign with much greater satisfaction than if he had kept it on any account whatever.

Mr. Graham and the churchwardens counted the money in the vestry, but Mr. Graham generally verified it when he got home, and sometimes he allowed the boys to help him in this.

(Concluded in our next.)

BEARS.



BEARS! Yes, I can tell you something about Bears. But where I am to begin I hardly know, there are so many varieties of the family. There are Grizzly Bears, *Ursus ferox*, or *horribilis*, nearly double the size of the Black Bear. There are Spectacled Bears, and Brown Bears, and Polar Bears, and Malayan and Syrian Bears, all different in size, colour, shape, and habits, and yet all agreeing in certain well-marked family features, especially in their being *plantigrade*, that is, supported by the whole sole of the foot when they walk.

All bears are able to eat flesh, but in general they prefer a vegetable diet. They are heavy-looking, awkward animals, and whilst we fear and admire the lion and tiger, we poke fun at the bear, because there is something comical about him. What a funny story that is of the poor man, who, pursued by a brown bear, and losing ground every moment (for your bears can move quickly), turned sharp round when he could run no more, and faced his pursuer. Not knowing what to do, he lifted his stick, that being his only weapon, intending to defend himself as well as he could. The bear erected his huge form, as if for attack; when, to the intense relief of the poor gentleman, who expected to be squeezed to death, the bear began, not to throttle him, but to dance. There was something in the uplifted stick which reminded the bear of the severe discipline and the grievous punishments he had endured in his training, and he felt he was in the presence of a master, and had to act accordingly.

But some brown bears are more discerning than that one. There is a Norway bear which is said to be as wise as a whole jury, and yet so evil that no man dares to call it by its right name, for fear it



Brown Bear.

should bear him malice. So the people thereabouts get out of the hobble by calling that bear 'the old man with the fur cloak.'

The Brown Bear is not only wise, but very valuable. It is a perfect warehouse. It is a glazier's shop, for its bowels and other intestines are used as glass; an ironmonger's shop, for its bladebones make good scythes; a draper's shop, for they get out of its wonderful carcass bed and bedding, bonnets, gloves,

and overshoes; and what remains is good for dinner. Long ago these creatures roamed about our own green shires, and were caught here and sent to Rome, where they made sport for the cruel Romans by fighting men in the amphitheatre. After many centuries the last English-born bear was killed, and then any rich men of those times who liked bear-baiting were obliged to purchase them abroad.

We still keep in our common speech a reminder of



Arctic, or White Bear.

those sad days, by speaking of any scene of noise and confusion as a bear-garden, and sometimes quiet villages are roused to excitement by the appearance of a dancing bear and a keeper or two, who make poor Bruin dance till coppers drop into the hat.

The most fierce and terrible of the family is the Grizzly Bear. The tail is the only part of its unwieldy body which is small. It is so small, and so difficult to find, that the frolicsome hunters, when

they unbend after the fatigues of a successful pursuit are over, ask some 'freshman' to grasp the tail; which he cannot do, much to his chagrin. It is curious to notice how the disposition of this bear varies with the place in which he spends his days. On one side of the North American chain of mountains these bears are mild, because their food consists chiefly of berries, roots, and vegetables; but on the other slope of the same Rocky Mountains their love

of blood is fostered by the abundance of bisons and other animals which come across their path. The Grizzly Bear is very large, and armed with terrific claws, sharp and curved, something like those of a cat. He is very bold, and slow to part with his life—a terrible enemy, indeed.

The Polar Bear differs much from the rest of the tribe, and is wonderfully and beautifully fitted in its shape and habits for its ungenial home. Often may it be seen, a solitary voyager on an iceberg, where it waits until it can seize upon the floating bodies of the seal or whale. Often it is carried on a piece of ice from Greenland to Iceland, where it commits great havoc among the sheep, and is at length knocked on the head by the people. This bear is white, and in this respect it is like the Syrian bears who tore in pieces the mockers of Elisha. Those Syrian bears are very savage. There is a story how the noble hero, Godfrey of Bouillon, whilst engaged in the siege of Antioch, gallantly rescued a poor wood-cutter from a Syrian bear. The animal, enraged at Godfrey's interference, turned upon him, and it was only after a long and severe struggle that the knight, armed as he was in steel, and using as he did a well-tempered sword with much skill, could bury his blade in the heart of his savage foe. Nor did Godfrey escape unhurt. The old chronicler tells us he received a dangerous, and all but deadly wound.

Bears generally scoop out a den for themselves when winter comes on. Here they pass the long dreary season in a state of slumber, and without food.

G. S. O.

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Continued from page 188.)



AND now the case of the English at Jellalabad seemed indeed hopeless. The army they had counted on, and waited for, to come and relieve them, was destroyed; to try and make their way back to the Indian provinces would only be to meet the same fate as that of their unfortunate comrades, and every day they expected the victorious Akber Khan with his forces to

come and surround them. They might well have been down-hearted, but disaster and danger only seemed to spur them on to greater exertion; they felt that it rested with them alone to make good the disgrace of their country in that disastrous war, and they determined to hold out to the last.

Ever since the first stress of work at the defences was over, they had had service regularly on Sundays. Captain Seaton, now Major-General Sir Thomas Seaton, who has written an account of the siege, says:—

'The service was a great consolation to us all. Every one came as usual with sword and pistol, or musket and bayonet, and with sixty rounds of ammunition in pouch, ready at a moment's notice to march to battle. To me it was always an affecting sight to see those great, rough fellows of the 13th

with their heads bowed, humbly confessing their sins before God, and acknowledging their dependence upon His goodness and mercy; and I am sure that afterwards, when we were surrounded by greater perils than any we had yet encountered, there were many in the little band who felt the comfort that there was in having One they could appeal to in all their troubles and adversities.'

These 'greater perils' were now at hand. On the 15th of February the camp of Akber Khan was in sight, about twelve miles off. The garrison did all they could to be ready for him.

Three days afterwards Captain Seaton was out with a working-party, lowering a part of the *old* walls of Jellalabad, which, as you may remember, were some way outside the town, when they heard a rumbling sound, faint at first, but getting louder and louder, till it sounded as if a thousand heavy waggons were being driven over a rough pavement. The ground heaved like the sea, and the whole plain seemed rolling in waves towards them. They looked towards the town; houses and walls were rocking and reeling in a terrific manner, and all the parapets, which had cost so much time and labour to build, were crumbling away like sand. 'The whole place was enveloped,' says Captain Seaton, 'in one immense, cloud of dust, out of which came cries of alarm and terror from the hundreds within.'

After the rumbling sound ceased there was a dead silence, and the men of the working-party stood so deeply impressed with the terror of the scene, that they could not utter a word. They, so brave when they had to do with a human enemy, were now deadly pale with fear. It was the shock of an earthquake which they had heard and seen.

When the dust cleared away Jellalabad was a scene of desolation. The houses looked 'as if some gigantic hand had taken them up and thrown them down again in one confused heap of ruins.' The parapets all round had fallen in, and the wall in many places was split to the foundations.

'Our walls,' writes Sir Thomas Seaton, 'in which we took so much pride, and in which we had so much confidence, were destroyed in a few seconds more effectually than by a month's cannonading. The hand of the Almighty had indeed humbled our pride, and taught us that He alone is a sure defence.'

Fortunately but few lives were lost. Some were dug out uninjured from the ruins; and one officer, passing along the ramparts, saw the ground open beneath him and fell in, but was thrown out again by the violence of the upheaving.

There was no time for idle wonder or despair, for the enemy were close at hand. Without a moment's delay every man in garrison was set to work, and in four days the parapet was rebuilt; but the labour was terrible. During those four days not an officer or man took off his clothes. Every one spent the short intervals of work at his post on the ramparts, ready for defence if attacked. Happily, Akber Khan did not discover the condition of the town, or he might easily have overpowered it. It was not till the walls were repaired that he crossed the river, making a great show with his

splendid horsemen and many standards. They took possession of Piper's Hill, and surrounded the town on all sides; and now, for the first time, the siege was close and complete. No provisions could be got in, and there was a daily fight for the forage. The grass-cutters who went out did so at the risk of their lives, and so little grass could be got for the horses, that most of them had to be killed and served as food for the garrison. They were now on half rations, and nothing but a little salt meat and coarse flour was left. Akber Khan seemed to intend to starve them out instead of attempting an assault.

Ammunition, too, was getting very scarce; and I must tell you of a plan the soldiers tried for getting lead. They dressed up a figure with a red coat and cocked hat, and stuck it up so that it could be seen above the ramparts. The Affghans sent thousands of bullets at it, and shouted when they thought they had hit it; it was kept always in motion, and they probably thought it was the English General. When they left off firing, after dark, the soldiers went outside and picked up the bullets, of which immense numbers were found.

From the 2nd of March all slept at their posts on the walls, and no one took off his clothes. They did not wear their uniforms, but coats of rough camel's-hair cloth, which were more suitable for the work they had to do. Often, at night, there were slight earthquake shocks, and they were always in fear of their walls again falling down, in which case nothing could have saved them. Thus the month of March wore on.

Once when they were nearly starving, they saw a large flock of sheep close under the walls. Akber Khan had them driven there, in order to eat the grass on the only place where the grass-cutters were still able to get any for the horses. But the sheep answered a different purpose; for the garrison made a sally, and after a skirmish, succeeded in driving the whole flock into the town.

All through this time of danger and privation great good feeling prevailed between the soldiers of the garrison; even between the English and native troops, or Sepoys. They agreed so well, that only one quarrel took place during the siege. I will tell you about it. A soldier of the 13th, and a sepoy, met each other on a little narrow foot-path, where there was hardly room for two people to pass; and it happened that the Englishman slipped, and fell into the mud, on which he lost his temper, and struck the Sepoy a violent blow. The Sepoy complained, and the matter came before General Sale, who reproved the Englishman very severely, and ordered him into confinement. As he was being marched off, the Sepoy came up to Sir Robert, and said,—'General Sahib, forgive him; there has not been one quarrel between any of us ever since the regiments have been together—why should there be now? You have scolded him, so pray forgive him.'

The General granted the Sepoy's request; and the soldier said he was very sorry that he had given way to his temper, and struck a man who could behave so generously.

Towards the end of March the besieged were cheered by the hope of relief—a force under Gene-

ral Pollock, they heard, was coming to their rescue. Spies kept coming in from time to time with news of Pollock, but still he did not come; and provisions were nearly at an end, and the garrison could not hold out much longer. But they thought they had perceived of late that the Affghans were losing heart, and General Sale determined on one last great effort.

So on the 7th of April the walls were manned by the camp-followers, and such of the sick and wounded as could stand, and all the rest sallied out to make an attack on Akber's camp. There was a hard day's fighting, for the enemy was greatly superior in numbers; but when evening came, the Affghans were flying in all directions. The whole of Akber's camp, with guns, ammunition, standards, and plunder, fell into the hands of the English. The camp was fired, and its flames proclaimed their victory to the whole valley. It was a wonderful and complete deliverance; that night they slept in bed undisturbed, after thirty-six nights of watching on the ramparts.

A few days afterwards General Pollock's long-expected force came up, only to find the work already done, and Jellalabad free. The band of the 13th played them in to the tune of 'Ye're ower lang o' comin.'

When the defenders of Jellalabad returned to India, the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, gave them a reception at Ferozepoor, such as they felt (in the language of one of them) to be 'a noble and ample return for all their toil and suffering' throughout that weary winter.

When they came to the river Sutlej, the boundary of the British territory, they found the bridge of boats which crossed it decked out with flags and streamers. The Governor-General himself met them at the bridge-head, and was the first to welcome them back to the soil of their own provinces. From thence they entered Ferozepoor in a sort of triumphal procession, passing between the long lines of elephants splendidly caparisoned, and then finding all the troops in camp there, drawn up to receive them with presented arms.

They were received with the same marks of honour at every place they marched through on their way to Agra. Each man received a medal, which was a new thing in the Indian service.

And ever since, in memory of their bravery and endurance, they have been distinguished by the title of the 'Illustrious Garrison.'

A. F. G.

(To be continued.)

LINES ON A WHISPERING GALLERY.

ON the wall of the whispering gallery in Gloucester Cathedral is inscribed these lines:—

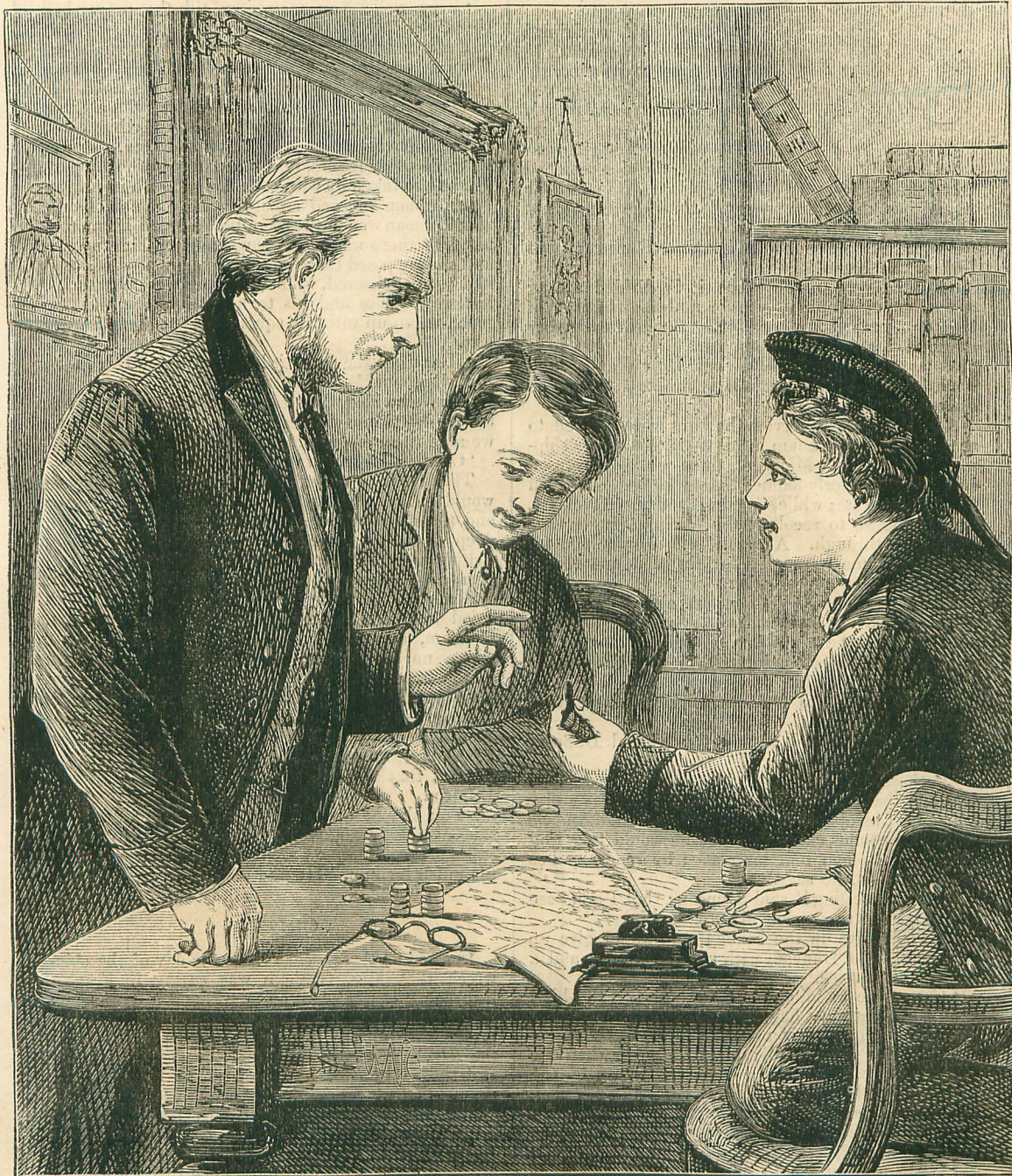
'Doubt not but God, Who sits on high,
Thy secret prayers can hear,
When a dead wall thus cunningly
Conveys soft whispers to the ear.'





They had Divine Service regularly on Sundays.

Chatterbox.



Mr. Graham and his Sons counting the Money.

MISS GREENE'S TIP.

(Concluded from page 195.)

O-DAY there was a goodly heap. Sovereigns, half-sovereigns, and all other coins, were represented.

'A farthing!' exclaimed Duncan. 'Who could be so mean as to put in a farthing?'

'Once half a farthing was offered, Duncan; and do you not remember that it was said to be a greater gift than those which the rich men had

cast into the treasury? "They had given of their abundance, she of her penury." It is the motive, not the sum, of which God takes account.'

'What a lot of money it is!' said Duncan: 'just look at the heaps!'

'Not so very much when it is divided among a number of people who have nothing whatever of their own,' replied Mr. Graham. 'But still I am very thankful for it, and I am sure many must have given as much as they possibly could, for Wanborough is not a rich place though it is inclined to take its duties too easily.'

After the second service the boys were allowed to accompany Mr. Graham in his visits to the poor shipwrecked people. Many of them entirely refused comfort, and bitterly blamed those who had persuaded them to emigrate; while some were noisy and reckless, with no desire to recollect the terrible danger they had passed through. A special service was held for them, and some were glad to join in it and return thanks for their preservation.

There was one boy of about eleven, who had neither father nor mother. He was going out with an uncle, but the uncle was drowned, and the boy was a special object of interest to Frank.

'Just fancy if either of us was like that, with no relations!' he said to Duncan, as they walked home together.

'Not very likely, I should think,' said Duncan, whistling.

'Perhaps not. I heard Mr. Jones say to Mr. Graham that he was such a bright lad, it was a pity he couldn't be apprenticed in Wanborough. And he said if ten pounds could be raised he would take him himself, and teach him his trade: he generally has fifteen pounds, he says.'

'Very interesting!' said Duncan: 'but I don't see that it matters to us what Mr. Jones thinks.'

'I would give up the canoe if you would give up the watch,' said Duncan, with a crimson face, and a rather hoarse voice.

'If you are an idiot, I am not. Really the high wind last night must have affected your brain, Frank. Pray, how long have you been so very good?'

'I am not good at all; and of course, when one thinks of it, you couldn't be expected to give up the watch. You have wanted one so long, and at school it is certainly a bore not to have one.'

'I don't much care whether I am expected to go without it or not, but I certainly shan't.'

'What are you sitting down there for, Arthur?'

said Mrs. Graham the next morning, as she went down to breakfast.

'It is Duncan's birthday, mother, and I do so hope Frank will have forgotten all about it. I want to be the very first to wish him many happy returns; and I've got the text I painted for him.'

'Very well: you may stay till the prayer-bell rings.'

Unfortunately, however, the prayer-bell rang before Duncan was ready, and Arthur unwillingly left his post and came down with his text in his hand. A little square box lay on the study-table, with a green paper pulled through the string, and Arthur could not help giving a glance at it now and then. It was with the other letters, and must have come by post. He was so taken up with examining it, with its narrow green ribbon and red seals, that he did not observe that Duncan was in the room till he heard his mother tell him there was a paper waiting for him to sign, and she supposed there was a birthday present, as it had been registered. Then Arthur remembered his birthday wishes and his text, but Duncan was too much taken up with the square box to notice the little boy.

'How tight the paper is! What do you think it is, Mrs. Graham?'

'I have no idea what it is, nor where it comes from, but no doubt one of these letters will tell us. Shall we read them and see?'

'Oh, no; let us see it directly,' said Duncan.

The first knot was carefully untied, but his patience would hold out no longer, and tearing off the paper and the seals he opened the little box and showed, deep down in the cotton wool, a beautiful watch, ticking away in the merriest manner, and for brightness and every other good quality putting Mr. Keller's watches quite into the shade. They all stood round—Clara, Kate, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham, and the other children; all but Frank, whom nobody seemed to miss till they sat down to the breakfast-table.

'Frank is not often late; run up and see if he is coming, Arthur,' said Mrs. Graham.

'Oh, I quite forgot to tell you, Mrs. Graham. Frank has got a headache, and said he could not get up, but that he did not want his breakfast,' said Duncan.

'You should have told us that before, Duncan,' said Mrs. Graham, rising from the table to go upstairs and see him. 'I am afraid Saturday night was too much for him. He had better stay in bed.'

CHAPTER V.

It was just three weeks from the day of the shipwreck that Mrs. Graham was sitting in Frank's bedroom. It was silent and dark, and Mrs. Graham dozed as she lay back in an easy-chair. She had been sitting up the greater part of each night with the boy, who was in extreme danger. The wetting and the excitement had brought on an attack of rheumatic fever, which had affected his heart.

His brother and sisters had only been allowed to come in quietly, and sit by him without speaking much, but they had shown a tenderness and anxiety about him which did him more good than words.

Duncan had been kept at home while his brother was so ill, but it had at last been decided that he was to waste no more time, and that he should return to school on the following morning. On this Sunday evening Duncan very much wished to see his brother alone. A heavy weight had been lying on his mind lest Frank should die, and the last request he had made Duncan should have been refused.

Fortune favoured him, for Mrs. Graham roused herself as he came gently into the room, and asked him if he would watch Frank for a few minutes while she went to look after Mr. Graham, who had just come in. She drew the curtains aside, for the day was waning, and as she did so Duncan could not help giving a little cry of pain. He had only been in the darkened room hitherto, and had had no idea of the terrible wasting and alteration which those three weeks of illness had wrought. He was quite unused to sickness, and it appeared to him that Frank's face was very nearly like those they had both seen carried into the house on the night of the wreck.

For a moment he quite forgot what he was going to say, and tears gathered in his eyes.

'You must give my love to the fellows in my form,' Frank whispered. 'Tell Collins he will get a-head of me now. And look here, Frank; if I don't get well, you know, I think I should like Collins to have that Bible of mine. He would like the maps and references, and he wouldn't shy it about. Of course I'd give it to you, or Clara, or Kate, if they hadn't got one like it. I should like to see father and mother again. I tried all last night to remember what they were like when they went away. The photos don't seem to be them somehow. I should like you to tell them how good Mr. and Mrs. Graham have been to us all. Mind you do. Don't let them think all this is their fault. Do you know, Duncan, that is one reason why I didn't want to die? I am so afraid people will blame them for letting me be out that night. You'll set all that right.'

'Oh! I say, don't talk like that!' said poor Duncan turning away. 'I can't bear it! You'll get all right. But look here, Franky, I tell you what I want to say. You know my father sent me that watch for my birthday?'

'So you'll get a canoe with the money,' interrupted Frank.

'No. I've given three pounds of it to Mr. Graham for the boy you wanted to do something for. I kept fifteen shillings to take back to school, and Mr. Graham gave me back another pound, and said I had better only give him two for the boy. He seemed so much pleased at my doing it, but of course I told him I should never have thought of it if it hadn't been for you. And while I was about it I thought I would make a clean sweep of my conscience, so I told him about my getting half-a-crown out of Mrs. Graham. And you can't think how kind he was. He didn't blame me a bit, and talked to me as if he thought I meant to try to be better.'

Frank did not speak. He had somehow got Duncan's hand in his, and now he drew his face down towards him and kissed him, the first time since they were little children together.

'I didn't say anything about your money, you know,' said Duncan; 'so you can do as you like.'

'I gave him mine the other night,' said Frank. 'Wednesday night, you know, after the doctor had gone, and when you all came to say good-night. I knew what they all thought that night, so I settled up my business. And now, whatever happens, I shall be so happy after this talk with you. Mr. Jones is going to take that boy, you know, and you might look after him a little perhaps. I am so sorry for him, he has got no father and mother, and no Mr. and Mrs. Graham instead of them.'

'Now then, my dear Duncan, I must turn you out,' said Mrs. Graham: 'you shall come and see him for a minute before you go away in the morning.'

Frank followed him out of the room with his eyes, and then turned round with such a contented expression that Mrs. Graham felt that rather good than harm had been done by the interview.

There were still many anxious days and nights to be gone through, but in the end the fever was conquered and Frank recovered. His illness had been a great blessing, not only to Duncan, who had by it been aroused to a sense of his selfishness, but to Clara, who had been in danger of becoming a fashionable young lady, intent only upon the colours and arrangement of her dress. The feather was given up, and she spent the money intended for it on flannel for the poor, as well as much time in making up the garments.

You may be sure that when Major and Mrs. Wells received Katie's present they also got a letter from Mrs. Graham, saying how well the pocket-money of the others had by their own desire been spent, and that this gave them the greatest happiness. James Deacon, the shipwrecked boy, was a very good, steady fellow, but he did not take to Mr. Jones's trade, and he is now regimental servant to Duncan Wells, who got his commission early, and went out to India, not very long after his parents returned to England.

Frank is at Cambridge, and hopes some day to be the parson of a country parish, with Katie for a housekeeper.

A BOLD JUMP.

THE little village of Pite, near the valley of the Inn, in the Tyrol, is situated in a long, narrow ravine, at the end of which is a huge rock. Over the precipitous side of this rock dashes a mountain-stream, which passes through the valley and the village. Both sides of the valley are here and there bounded by steep precipices, from which great blocks have been loosened and have fallen into the bed of the torrent. These cause eddies and whirlpools, and when the stream is full after a heavy storm, the district can hardly be crossed over except at the risk of life.

In August, 1819, the valley was in this dangerous condition, when Peter Hirner, aged fifteen, the son of a poor labourer, stood on the bank of the torrent, to cut down with his sickle the grass which sprouted from the crevices of the rocks for his goats. By his side stood his twelve-year-old brother George, and further up, a little brother of seven. Suddenly Peter slipped, fell over the steep rock, and dis-

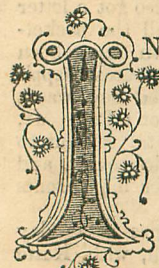
appeared from his brother George's eyes. George heard the roaring of the stream—what could he do? Quickly he climbed from one mass of rock to the other, and thus reached at last the edge of the torrent. But how amazed he was when he looked over! Just before him rushed the stream, and almost in the midst of the stream rose some huge masses of rock. Upon one of these George saw his brother lying, his head and arms partly in the water, and with stains of blood on his body. Then the boy summoned up all his courage, made a bold spring, and reached the piece of rock.

There he stood, quite alone, his helpless brother beside him. Exerting all his strength, he clung firmly to the rock, and dragged the body of his stunned brother out of the eddying stream. Then he held him in his arms; he was deadly pale, and gave no signs of life. Full of anguish, George looked around.

Meanwhile, his youngest brother, too, had climbed some way down. To him George cried that he must go to their father and tell him what had happened. At last the father came, with some men from the neighbourhood. Both brothers were rescued from their perilous position, and after some time the elder was, by the help of the doctor, restored to health.

J. F. C.

EARLY DAYS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.



In the year 1771 there was born in the city of Edinburgh the little child who grew up to be known throughout the world as Sir Walter Scott, the great writer and poet. Both his parents were highly educated persons, and perhaps this influenced the tastes and habits in which their son grew up. At about the age of eighteen months he lost the use of his right leg, after a severe attack of fever; but, although he was always lame, he was wonderfully brave and active as he grew older. Those earliest days were spent in his grandfather's house at Sandy-Knowe, and while he stayed at the old farm he would go with the cow-baillie and roll about on the grass for hours among the herds and flocks, making friends with the sheep and lambs, who soon knew the little lame boy. One of those days he was forgotten amongst the crags, and a thunder-storm came on; but when his aunt remembered where he was, and hastened herself in search of him, she found him lying happily on his back, watching the lightning and crying, 'Bonny! bonny!' at every flash.

His grandmother used to tell him the old Border tales which she had heard in her own childhood, and so the names of Jamie Telfer and other heroes were familiar to him, and he could repeat long pieces by heart from the stories and ballads with which his Aunt Janet amused him.

When he was about four years old Walter was taken to Bath, with the hope that the mineral waters might cure his lameness, but very little change took place.

In 1779 the lad returned to Edinburgh, and was

sent to the High School there, where he was placed in the second class, which contained some very good scholars, amongst whom Scott became a general favourite from his mirthfulness and fun; besides, in winter he could tell any number of tales as they sat round the fireside in a circle listening to him. Of himself, he says that he 'disgusted his kind master' by his negligence and frivolity, as much as he pleased him by his intelligence and talent.

One tale which Scott has now and then told of his school-days is this. 'There was a boy in my class,' he says, 'who stood always at the top, and with all my efforts I could not get above him. Days passed, but still he kept his place, do what I would; but at last I noticed, that whenever a question was asked him he fumbled with his fingers at a particular button on his waistcoat. In an evil moment I removed it with a knife. When the boy was again questioned his fingers sought the button in vain; in his distress he looked down for it, but it was not to be seen, and as he stood confounded I took his place, nor did he ever guess who was the author of his wrong. Often in after-life has the sight of him smote me as I passed by him, and I resolved to make him some reparation, but it always ended in good resolutions.'

When thirteen years old, young Scott first read Percy's *Reliques*, and this work had a great effect in making him a poet; still, before this time he had tried his hand at verse-making, some of which attempts were found in after days. The rupture of a blood-vessel laid him on his bed for many weeks, and then his great amusement was reading; for he tells us he did nothing else from morning till night, unless some one was charitable enough to play chess with him. From a circulating library in Edinburgh he obtained many old romances and plays, and when tired of these he turned to histories, voyages, and travels, and thus acquired a quantity of ill-arranged information, which proved useful in the literary work to which he devoted his life, and which has made his name famous.

In 1792 he was called to the bar as an advocate; but he had very little practice. His literary life then really began, which lasted for six-and-thirty years. In 1805 he gave to the public the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' and became the poetical favourite of the day. 'Marmion,' the 'Lady of the Lake,' and other poems followed. In 1814 he published the historical novel of 'Waverley,' but for several years it was a secret that he was the author of the book, who was spoken of as 'the Great Unknown.' In the next few years he published with his name several similar romances, among them 'Rob Roy,' 'The Heart of Midlothian.' He assisted in starting 'The Quarterly Review.'

To his pen he owed his land and castle at Abbotsford, and from 1820 to 1826 he lived there like one of his own feudal chiefs; but in 1826 there came a commercial crash, and the publishers of his books became bankrupt, and he was found to be liable for a vast debt. Scott set himself nobly to work to repay it. He overtasked his strength in the effort, and in 1832 breathed his last at Abbotsford, leaving behind him a name which will never be forgotten.

M. F. S.





Sir Walter Scott.

THE TWO BUTTERFLIES.

FLITTING o'er a meadow
Went two Butterflies,
One of simple yellow,
One of many dyes.

Passing near the other,
Said the bright and gay :
'You look nothing, brother,
In that plain array !'

Scarce had this been uttered,
When a boy came past—
Chased the many-coloured,
Till he held him fast.

Still the yellow safely
O'er the meadow sped,
Thanking fate that made him
Without gold or red.

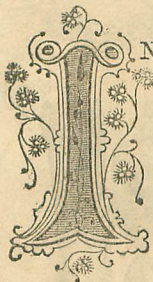
Men of chains and gew-gaws,
Pins and studs and rings,
There are many losses
Which such finery brings.

W. R. E.

A SAILOR'S FAMILY.

A Story of Antwerp, from the Flemish of Hendrick Conscience.

By James F. Cobb, Esq.



In a basement-room of a house in the Winkel Street of Antwerp sat Anne-Mie, the poor widow of the ship-wrecked sailor John Boots, busily at work making new corn-sacks and patching up old ones.

The little chamber, by its dreary emptiness, bore witness to the poverty of its inhabitants. The whole furniture consisted of a couple of rickety chairs, a wooden bench, and a table.

In an alcove stood a bedstead enclosed by blue curtains. Several threadbare articles of clothing hanging here and there on the walls would lead one to suppose that this bed was the sleeping-place of the children of the family.

Anne-Mie had been very unwell during the last six weeks. She had only lately become strong enough to stand, and even now her hollow cheeks, and the unnatural brightness of her deeply sunken eyes, told that she was still very ill.

As she worked she would now and then shake her head or heave a deep sigh. Her eyes now and again filled with tears, and she would cast a look of love and deep longing around the room ; then she would start and raise her head, listening as if she were expecting some one. For the third time she was disturbed in her sad thoughts by a mysterious sound, which in truth only arose from her own heart. She clasped her hands and murmured in terror, 'His voice! My name! Anneken dear! Ah! thus he often called me when he was happy, and he was so

almost always, the good —— ! My head is weak : I am losing my senses !'

For the fourth time the same fancy had come upon her.

'Again !' she exclaimed with increased excitement. 'His voice thrills through my soul ! Can his spirit be standing invisible near me, though I do not see him ? Who knows ? On this day !'

She arose, and went with tottering steps towards a door, which she opened, and which led into a second much smaller room. Here, in a corner near the bed, a sailor's sou'-wester hat of oilskin was hanging on a nail. The poor widow looked at this for some time, then she sank down on her knees, clasped her hands, and gazed up to Heaven, while her lips moved in fervent prayer.

While Anne-Mie was thus absorbed in prayer, some one appeared at the door of the chamber : she shook her head, looked in with pity, but would not disturb her. She was a little old woman, crooked and deformed, but her eyes were still bright, and goodness and kindness were impressed on her features. She held a basket on her arm.

The widow must now have finished her prayer, for she stood up and looked round. Her eyes were full of tears.

'Anne-Mie, Anne-Mie, you don't do well,' said the old woman ; 'there you are, quite alone, sobbing and crying ! Prayer is indeed a blessed thing, child ; but you must not excite yourself in the way you are doing. Do you wish to be ill again—to die, perhaps ? Think of your poor children !'

'Ah, Theresa dear,' sighed the widow as she came into the other room, 'I can't do otherwise. I don't know what is the matter with me. Every moment I hear his voice calling me by name ; it seems as if he was stretching out his arms to me.'

'Do not yield to such thoughts, Anne-Mie ; for while you thus speak your whole body trembles. You are nervous and weakened by the fever you have had. But sit down, I have brought something with me to strengthen you.'

She took a stone jug out of the basket and placed it on the table.

'Come, this will do you good,' she continued. 'Warm soup with a piece of meat in it ! I got it for myself from Mr. Jore's the merchant, but you know, Anne-Mie, for whom I really meant it.'

'Indeed, indeed, you good-hearted Theresa ! how in my whole life can I ever repay you for all your kindness ?' sobbed the widow. 'Without you, without your help, I should long since have been in my grave.'

'No, no ; such words are needless. Here is a spoon ; begin at once.'

The widow took some of the soup. A smile of contentment passed over her features. It seemed as if new power of life had passed into her frame.

Suddenly she put down the spoon and said, 'I have had enough, Theresa ; let me put away the soup till the evening.'

'No, no !' cried the old woman ; 'not yet ! You will take me in again, and keep the soup for your children. They do not require it ; they are healthy, and can well bear their coarse fare.'

'Well, as you please, Theresa. But my poor

Mieken is sadly pale, and Roseken is weak from want of food.

'These are fancies you indulge in, Anne-Mie: your children are as rosy as apples. You can't make me believe you have had enough in five or six spoonfuls of soup! You must take every drop of it, or I shall be angry with you and go away. Are you going to drink it, or not?'

'Well, as you wish it,' sighed the widow as she took the spoon.

When she had finished the soup, and the meat that was in it as well, she said with beaming eyes, as she pressed her hand upon her breast, 'Ah, Theresa dear, that was good soup, indeed! Too good! such strong soup! I think I shall soon be able to go out again and carry a whole load of mussels. Thanks, thanks: God will reward you, Theresa. Now I shall busily set to work making sacks; even to-day I may make a few pence, for every little helps—does it not? Sit down for a moment, it makes me happy even to look at you.'

'You talk of mussels, Anne-Mie!' cried the old woman with joy; 'well, I have good news for you. Madame Dooms has promised me that she will advance me three florins on the lace which I worked on my pillow last week. As soon as you can go out I will fetch the three florins, and you can buy mussels and shrimps with them, and earn money for yourself and your children as before. Nelis, the carriage-maker, will let you have a barrow for five cents a-day.'

'Ah, how good you are to me! If you were my mother you could not love me more. What have I done to deserve it all?'

'Come, come, are we not all Christians, Anne-Mie? and one must help the other. When do you think you will be strong enough to go out again?'

'In five or six days, perhaps, if the landlord will only give us a week or two's delay; otherwise it will go hardly with us.'

'He will wait now that you are getting well, be sure of that.'

'He is very poor himself, Theresa. He needs his money terribly; and you know that last Saturday he threatened to turn us by force into the street. Had I only now something to pawn or to sell! but, alas! everything is gone.'

'I will go and speak to Nasselman myself to-morrow. Cheer up! I do not think you have anything to fear. But tell me, Anne-Mie, where are your children?'

'John is in the shop with Mr. Joos the sail-maker; you know it well.'

'Yes, but Mieken and Roseken?'

'I have sent the children to church, Theresa: this is the anniversary of his departure, 15th April. There, on the threshold of this door, he gave me his farewell kiss; and he pressed me so warmly and lovingly in his arms as if he felt in his heart that the parting was for ever—alas! for ever. I followed him secretly without his knowing it. Hours had passed since he had gone, but still I sat with my child pressed to my breast staring after him.'

'Ah, tears in your eyes again!' cried the old woman.

'No, it is over, Theresa; I feel much stronger now. It was God's will and we must submit to it.'

'It is now seven years ago, is it not?'

'Eight years, Theresa dear: it seems to me as if it were but yesterday!'

'And are you certain that he was drowned?'

'Quite certain, Theresa: it was published in all the newspapers that the English three-master, *Milton*, went down with all on board, near an island called Borneo. Ah! there was not a braver soul,' she continued after a pause, 'not a better heart anywhere to be found; his wife and his children were his greatest joy, he devoted himself to them. It was for our sake that he went to sea, I was the cause of it. When our family increased so rapidly, and I began to perceive that the wages which my husband earned at the wharf as a ship's carpenter did not suffice for me to bring up my children properly, I wanted to lease another house in the neighbourhood, and to keep there a little shop of groceries and vegetables; but with all our efforts to save it was impossible to scrape together money enough to set up the shop.'

'It happened then that my husband, who had some carpentering to do on board an English three-master, spoke to the captain—for John Boots had learned some English on the wharf. The captain, who was about to return to London, and then to take a voyage of several months, offered my husband the situation of carpenter on board his ship. The wages offered him were so high that I and the children could live on the half which was paid him in advance while he was away, and the other half when paid would suffice for us to open the shop of which we had so long dreamed. Believe me, Theresa, I did all that I could to keep him back, but the thought that he was about to secure the happiness of the children made him go. O my poor, my good John! his love has cost him his life. Do not heed my tears, I must let them flow again.'

'And was it put in the newspapers that your husband was drowned?' inquired the old woman.

'Yes, in the papers. Matthew the pilot read it to me out of one of them, in which it mentioned that the ship had sunk with all on board.'

'And you have no doubt about his death?' said the old woman, in a strange tone.

'But why, my dear Theresa, do you ask me in such a strange way?' cried the widow in wonder.

'Because, Anne-Mie, last night I had a long dream, in which I saw your husband alive before my eyes, and spoke to him, too!'

'Ah, Theresa, do not mock me with such stories.'

'You may laugh at me if you like, Anne-Mie, and at my strange dream, but your husband appeared to me as the king of the negroes on an island, and he wore a golden crown; broad bands of gold sparkled on his arms and legs, and on his breast hung a great chain of diamonds; but the others had made him black too, that he might be all the more like them. Then he said to me—how he knew me I don't know—'Theresa Spas, when you see my Anne-Mie tell her to have patience, for when the year is over I shall come home.' Was not that strange?'

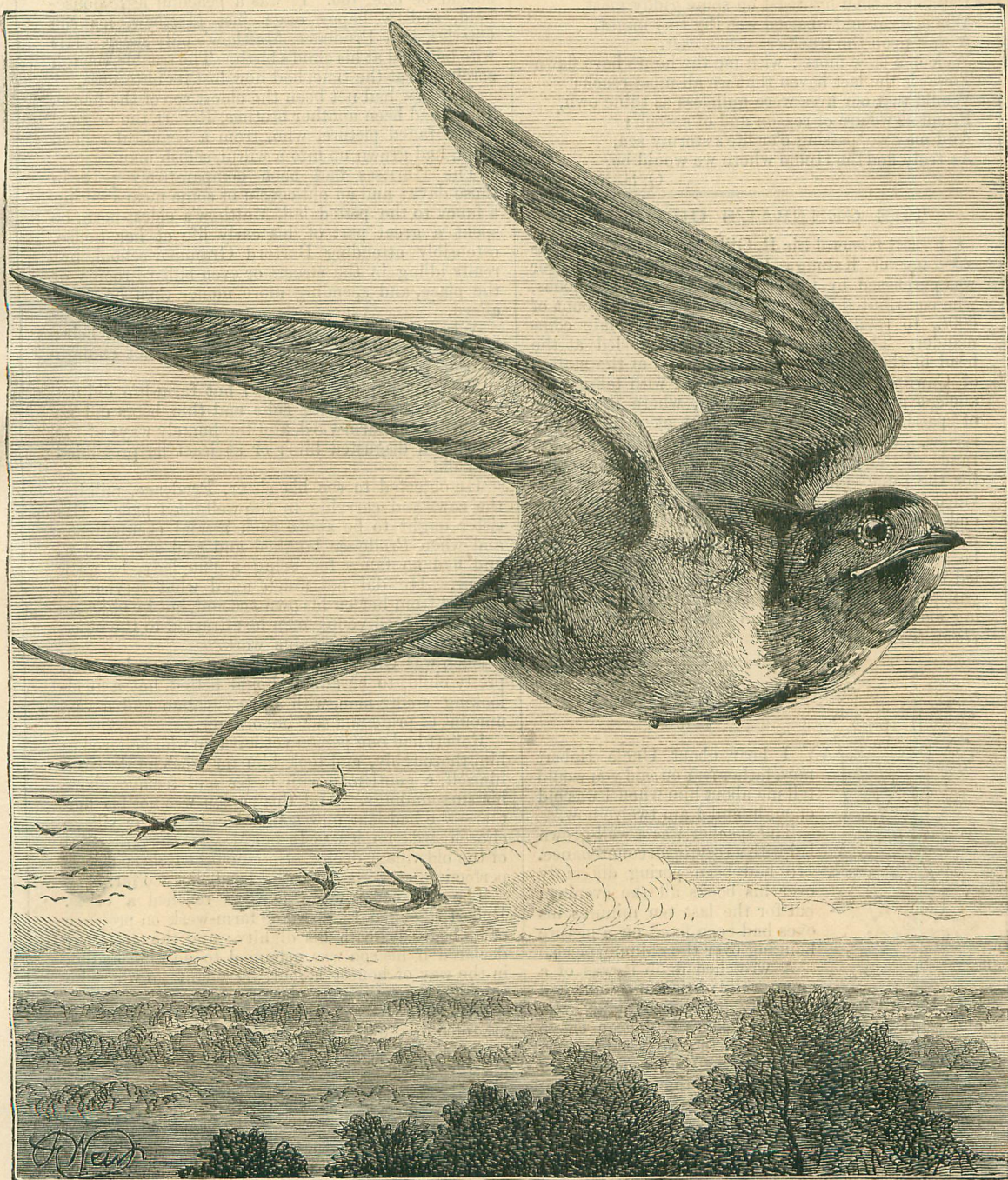
(To be continued.)





Anne-Mie at work.

Chatterbox.



The First Swallow. By HARRISON WEIR.

THE FIRST SWALLOW.

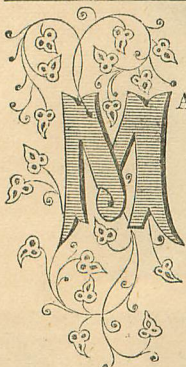
BEAUTIFUL wanderer, whither was thy flight
 On that sweet autumn day that saw thee last,
 Toying in the warm sunshine's fitful light,
 That called back memories of summer past
 And all the joys that were too bright to last?
 Perchance thou lightedst on some giddy mast,
 When spent and wearied was thy tiny might,
 A waif upon the trackless ocean cast.
 Welcome once more! with me the hours have flown
 Towards the last haven that we all must reach;
 Would that our lives were guileless as thine own,
 Proud as we are of reason and of speech;
 And may we, passing o'er life's stormy sea,
 As truly find the Home where we would be.

O. S. ROUND.

THE GENERAL'S CHARGER.

AFTER General Sir R. Gillespie fell at the storming of Kalunga, his favourite black charger was purchased by the privates of the 8th Dragoons, who contributed their prize-money, to the amount of 500*l.*, to retain this memento of their late commander. Thus the charger was always led at the head of the regiment on a march, and at the station of Cawnpore was usually indulged with taking his ancient post at the colour-stand, where the salute of passing squadrons was given at drill and on review. When the regiment was ordered home, the funds of the privates running low, he was bought for the same sum by a relation of ours, who provided funds and a paddock for him, where he might end his days in comfort; but when the corps had marched, and the sound of the trumpet had departed, he refused to eat, and on the first chance—being led out to exercise—he broke from his groom, and galloping to his old station on the parade, after neighing aloud, he dropped down dead.—*Abridged from Hamilton's 'Naturalist's Library.'*

UNCLE ROBERT.



MAY I hear about Uncle Robert now, father? You said you would tell me about him when I was old enough, and I am twelve now.

The speaker was a well-grown lad, with a rosy, open countenance. He had been poring diligently over his books all the evening; but for the last ten minutes his eyes had been fixed on a picture hanging over the chimney-piece.

A wretched daub it was of a young child; brilliant colours had been lavishly used to portray golden hair, blue eyes, and scarlet frock: but the colours had been cheap and bad, and all had faded now to a dirty uniformity. Yet 'Uncle Robert when a Child' had never been displaced from its post of honour, though years and change had well-nigh banished his name from the family talk.

The room in which the picture hung was a neatly

furnished apartment; books on the walls, a few leather-covered arm-chairs, and some good old china, placing it above the ordinary parlour of a farm-house.

Yet the owner, Matthew Harris, would tell you he was only a farmer, though a prosperous one, and had no wish or desire for his only child, save that he should be one, too. It was a peaceful little household, and a happy one; just Matthew, his son Charles, and Prudence, Matthew's only sister. His wife had died at his child's birth. The trouble, though sorely felt at the time, had now lost its bitterness.

Matthew had not been the eldest son of the house. There had been another brother, Robert, the original of the faded picture, who, from a beautiful spoiled child, had grown up into a wilful, selfish man.

The Harrises had been comparatively poor in those days; and an old cousin of some means taking a fancy to the petted lad, Matthew's eldest-born, he spent a great part of his early life at her house, ostensibly attending Barford Grammar-school, but really idling in the streets or even billiard-rooms of the place, and spending more money than he could afford.

When the old cousin died she made him her heir; but Robert only inherited 40*l.* a-year—not enough to keep him.

He went home for a time; but farm-life did not suit him: his fine-cloth suits and thin boots did no service in the farm-yard, and the homely ways of the household disgusted him: or at least he pretended they did.

He objected to see his sister, Prudence, milking the cows and carrying in the well-filled pails. His sister ought to be above such menial occupations; and when Prudence laughed and said she liked it, and had no fancy for being a fine lady, he grew angry. He did not much mind what service he exacted from her on his own account, but he objected to the half-bred young men he attracted to the house seeing his sister at servants' work.

Such was Uncle Robert at nineteen; no longer a pretty child, to be admired and petted, but a good-looking young man, with no occupation and a vast amount of pride and self-importance.

Robert had one person yet left him who believed in him thoroughly, and took him for what he declared himself, a gentleman with tastes and feelings above his surroundings. And this person was not his mother—she had lain now some months in the village churchyard; no, it was Isabel Mayne, the only child of the old village doctor. She thought Robert Harris perfection, and, alas! carried her belief too far.

The day came when matters reached a crisis. Robert declined to do some farm-work on pretence of its being beneath his dignity; and the old father declared if his son was ashamed to do what he did, in the way of honest labour, he might go where he would, the farm was no place for him.

And then Robert fired up, and declared he was ashamed of the low ways of his relations, and should never trouble them for the future, but would make his way in the world among gentlemen: Matthew might have the farm and welcome, and vegetate among the pigs and oxen for life, for all he cared.

The parting in anger cut the old father to the heart, despite his apparent displeasure with his son

but the whole village was excited next morning when Isabel Mayne was missing too, and report, for once in the right, declared she had gone off to be married to Robert Harris.

This was the Uncle Robert whose history his nephew craved to hear, and to this point his father told it him, first ascertaining that Aunt Prudence was busy in the storeroom, since the recital would have pained her.

'And have you learned nothing of Uncle Robert ever since?' asked the boy eagerly; 'it seems so odd to lose sight of so near a relation.'

His father shook his head.

'We think he must have changed his name, as we could not trace him after the first three years. We let him know of my father's death, but he never answered; and shortly after Prudence wrote again, and her letter was returned from the Dead Letter Office.'

'Is it on account of Uncle Robert you won't let me be a gentleman?' asked the boy blushing. 'I have quite as much money as the Vicar's son at school, and I never should be ashamed of any one at home.'

'You never could be like a gentleman born,' said his father smiling; 'but you can be a very well-informed farmer, and that is what I mean you to be: for, as you guess, poor Bob's mistake has made me very anxious to discourage the foolish idea that it is degrading for a man, possessing sufficient money to love an idle life, to work with his hand if necessary. Work is honourable.'

'And farm-work is very jolly,' said the boy, eagerly. 'Father, now we are so well off, may I try experiments when I grow up with the crops and the soil? You know I should like that.'

The Harrises were indeed a very prosperous family now. A few years back a considerable sum had been left to Matthew, who spent a part of it in thoroughly rebuilding and beautifying the old farm, enlarging his dairy, and altogether placing his establishment on a higher footing. Prudence was still mistress, and still did good work; but she no longer carried the milk-pail, her business now lay in directing and supervising the three buxom maid-servants.

It was nearly Christmas time, a wet, gloomy season, when an incident occurred that stirred the quiet household to its utmost depths.

Aunt Prudence was in the great kitchen watching the weighing-out of ingredients for Christmas puddings for the poor, when a rap came against the front-door. She never heard it; but Matthew and his son did, they being in the front parlour.

'Finish your book, I'll go to the door,' said the father; 'the people in the kitchen are so busy they don't hear.'

But a second later Charlie sprang up to answer his father's cry for a light.

There, at the door—was it possible?—he saw his father grasping the hand of a tattered scarecrow of a man all in rags, and bearing trace of long-suffering if not starvation!

'Charles, this is your Uncle Robert,' said his father.

'Come to die here if I may,' said the gaunt, shivering man.

They led him in, and seated him by the blazing parlour fire.

Charlie stared from the faded child of the picture to the shrunken man below.

'Why haven't you thrown that in the fire?' asked the wretched man; 'stamped on it, destroyed it? I was never anything but a trouble to you. I wanted to die in the fields, but I couldn't. Else why I crept here I cannot tell.'

'You came here because it is your home, Uncle Robert, where we will love you and care for you,' said the boy. 'Father, may I tell Aunt Prudence, and get the west-room bed made ready?'

It was a happy inspiration that made the boy speak. He crept away afterwards, a little frightened, a little puzzled, as youth will be, at the sight of an old man repenting—a prodigal son asking pardon from younger and happier souls.

And then Uncle Robert told his tale.

Isabel was dead years ago; her tender spirit had never got over the one wrong deed of her life—the forsaking in the night of her father's home.

She and her baby lay as peacefully asleep in their narrow grave as Matthew's happy wife.

After that Robert had no one to check him on his downward course; while imagining himself a gentleman he had led the life of a demon, living on gambling, and keeping up his wretched failing heart by drink.

A thousand times more defiled were hand and heart than if he had remained to guide his father's plough.

At the lowest depths of his degraded existence came a feeling that he would like to die at home; if they spurned him from the door he could crouch on the threshold, and on these wintry nights death would soon befriend him.

The newly-built house, with its solid pillars, struck a fresh chill to his heart: those whom he had once despised were now rich, and he was worse than a beggar.

The feeble knock was, however, sufficient to win him entrance into the home and heart of his kindred; and twenty years of absence had not choked nor deadened the love of brother and sister for the poor reprobate.

He became Prudence's dearest charge; for, worn with dissipation, and latterly with privations, Robert Harris soon sank into a feeble invalid, seldom able to leave his comfortable chair on the hearth.

No one reminded him of the past: the old doctor was dead, and none of Isabel's relations left in the place; but Robert could not forget, and shrank from the fields and lanes where he had wandered with the foolish but too-confiding girl.

The only two things on which he had set his heart seemed to be, first, that on his death, which was not far off he said, he might be laid by Isabel, in her humble grave in the town churchyard where she had died; secondly, that Charlie, with his good looks and good abilities, should be content to be a farmer, not try to be a gentleman.

Charley could hardly understand the anxiety of the poor man, for his disposition was so different. He had none of Robert Harris's temptations.

'Uncle, I don't want to be a gentleman,' he would



say: 'I should only look a fool if I tried to imitate Sir George Grange or Captain Waite. But father says I shall be well off when I grow up; so I mean to be a first-rate farmer, and have all the latest improvements, and try to make the men fond of me and work well under me. And I'm going to the Agricultural College next term to learn all about it; so don't you fret yourself.'

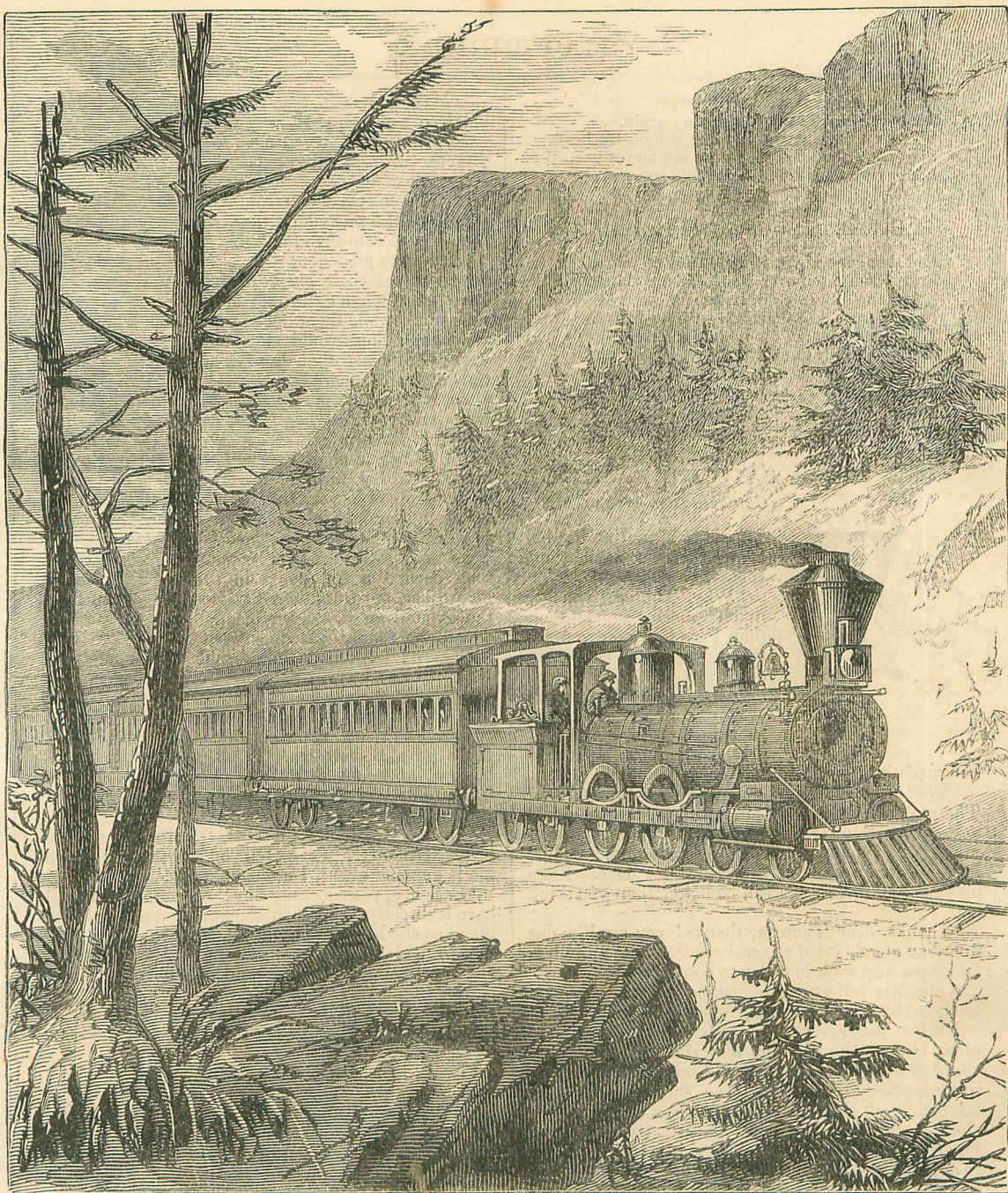
But poor Robert was anxious to the last. Weary and heart-broken, he sank into the grave, a warning to those who will not endeavour to do their duty in that state of life into which God has called them.

H. A. F.

GUILD'S SIGNAL.

GUILD, the engineer who met death bravely in a recent railroad accident near Providence, Rhode Island, had a peculiar signal, which he always gave on passing his home while on duty on his train. He was an old hand on the line, and for years, day and night, when rushing through the town, his locomotive never failed to give the signal which told his wife that all was well. The story of the signal and its sudden stoppage is thus told by the American poet, Bret Harte:—

'Two low whistles, quaint and clear,
That was the signal the engineer—



That was the signal that Guild, 'tis said—
 Gave to his wife at Providence,
 As through the sleeping town, and thence,
 Out in the night,
 On to the light,
 Down past the farms lying white he sped.
 As a husband's greeting, scant no doubt,
 Yet to the woman looking out,
 Watching and waiting, no serenade,
 Love-song or midnight roundelay,
 Said what that whistle seemed to say:

“To my trust true
 So love to you!
 Working or waiting, Good night!” it said.
 Brisk young bagmen, tourists fine,
 Old commuters along the line,
 Brakemen and porters glanced ahead,
 Smiled as the signal, sharp, intense,
 Pierced through the shadows of Providence—
 “Nothing amiss,
 Nothing—it is
 Only Guild calling his wife,” they said.

Summer and winter, the old refrain
 Rang o'er the billows of ripening grain,
 Pierced through the budding boughs o'erhead,
 Flew down the track when the red leaves burned
 Like living coals from the engine spurned;

Sang as it flew:

"To our trust true,
 First of all Duty—Good night," it said.

And then, one night, it was heard no more,
 From Stonington over Rhode Island shore,
 And the folk in Providence smiled and said,
 As they turned in their beds, "The engineer
 Has once forgotten his midnight cheer."

One only knew,
 To his trust true,
 Guild lay under his engine, dead.'

A SAILOR'S FAMILY.

(Continued from page 207.)



HE widow stared at her old companion for some time, then she said,—

'Why, Theresa, you are much more superstitious than I am! Don't you see that your dream is nothing else than the story which my boy John told his sisters yesterday in your presence? In that there was all about a sailor whom the black men

had made king of an island.'

'Yes! yes! indeed I had quite forgotten it,' said Theresa, half ashamed: 'it is the weakness of old age. Everything slips from my memory. But I must go home now, evening is drawing on. I must light my lamp and set to work at my lace. Keep up your courage, things will be better than you think for.'

'Thanks, dear Theresa, thanks! you are like our guardian angel,' cried the widow after her, and then took up a new sack in order to continue her sewing.

Anne-Mie felt strengthened, not only by the good food, but by the encouraging words of her old friend.

During her severe illness, her loving heart had often bled at the thought that she might die, and that her helpless children would fall into the deepest misery. She fancied that she saw them in vain stretching out their hands for a bit of bread. Now she hoped that the merciful God had removed the bitter cup from her lip. When her strength was restored, Theresa would lend her three florins. Then, as before, she would sell mussels and shrimps, and earn enough to support herself and her children.

Two little girls entered the room at this moment hand in hand, and ran with open arms up to the widow.

'Ah, there you are, my darlings!' cried the widow; 'and did you pray very earnestly, my children?'

'Oh yes, mother, that we did!' they answered.

'But, mother dear, I am so hungry, give me a piece of bread,' said the youngest; 'I am so hungry!'

'But, Roseken, why did you stay out so long? I

should think, indeed, that you were hungry. Sit down, children, and you shall have your supper.'

She went into the other room and came back directly with some rye bread and a green basin. Eager looks and upraised hands were directed to her whilst she cut two slices from the bread, on which she spread a little melted fat, and sprinkling a little salt over it gave it to the children.

With eyes glistening with pleasure the little girls began to eat their black bread. They seemed to have forgotten all the rest of the world, for when their mother told them not to eat in such a hurry, for she feared they would choke, they scarcely heard her. Only when their hunger was a little appeased they ate rather more quietly.

As it was now nearly dusk the widow lighted a lamp and resumed her work, every now and then gazing at her two little girls. Micken the eldest was fair like her mother, Roseken was dark and curly-haired like her father. Poverty had left no traces on the faces of either; they were fresh and blooming.

When they had finished their supper, Micken set to work to pick to pieces some bits of old rope, which were used afterwards for caulking ships. By this they earned a few cents in the week. Roseken helped her, but from time to time she took up from the ground an ill-shapen old doll, the forehead of which she fondly kissed.

'There! I hear our John,' said Micken suddenly.

'Ah! won't he tell us stories?' cried Roseken, with joy.

A boy of about fifteen, tall and strong for his age, entered the room, happiness beaming from his face. He wore a Scotch cap, a blue jacket with metal buttons, and canvas trowsers covered with spots of tar and pitch, so that he had quite the appearance of a young sailor.

'Mother! mother!' he cried, 'give me a slice of bread and butter. I can't tell you how the wolf within me is dancing about, I am so hungry!'

'Patience, patience, my boy!' she said; 'you shall have it directly:' and then she gave him a slice of rye bread as she looked sadly at him.

'Mother! mother!' he grumbled; 'you have not put any fat on my bread; and it is not very large, either.'

'John, my boy, have a little patience,' she said; 'in a few days I shall go out to sell shrimps and mussels again.'

'Look! look! I had quite forgotten this!' cried the boy, taking something out of his jacket-pocket. 'I had to take an awning to the English steamboat, and the cook Adrian—you know him well—has given me a sea-biscuit. See, it is made of sweet wheaten flour. Oh, that is too good, mother!'

'Why, you have just said you were dying with hunger! why did you not eat the biscuit, then?'

'I should not think of such a thing, indeed. I was only too glad when I got it, for I knew, mother, that you, who are ill—There; take it; eat it, and if there is any left, put it by till to-morrow.'

'Ah, mother, give me a piece!' begged both the little girls in one voice.

The widow broke the biscuit into four pieces, giving one to each of the girls and to John. But he refused it.

'The gluttons!' he murmured, looking angrily at the children, 'to take the piece of biscuit out of your mother's mouth!'

'No, John; do not accuse your innocent sisters,' said the widow; 'they have had nothing but rye bread all day. My illness has made us very poor, but things will be better as soon as I am strong enough to sell mussels.'

'Sell mussels! Why, mother, you can scarcely stand upright! Why don't you let me go in the steamboat? I should then earn four times as much as I do as a sailmaker's apprentice.'

'To sea? You, John, to sea? Oh, child! child! speak no more about it!'

'It is only from here to London.'

'No! be silent: you make me shudder.'

'Yes, mother, I understand very well—it is because my father was drowned at sea; But do you know what the cook of the steamer said to me about it? He said that one might feel a great deal more frightened to sleep on a bed, as a great many more men died on their beds than on the sea. Adrian asked me again to-day whether I would be under-cook on board his steamer. He likes me; he was my father's best friend. Besides good wages, he tells me I shall get some extras, and every now and then what is left over from the table I may bring home to you and my sisters. It is a fine prospect, mother, and on the sea! Oh, that is a jolly life!'

'John, my dear boy! see, you bring the tears into my eyes,' sighed the widow. 'The thought that you should go and risk your life on board a ship makes me tremble, and feel quite ill. Ah, do not talk of such terrible things!'

'If it displeases you, mother, you know very well that is enough for me. I will speak no more about it. But don't think that I am afraid of the water.'

'Come, John, sit down here beside us, and tell us stories,' begged Micken.

'As to stories,' said John, sitting down, 'you must know, mother, that there is a new guest come into our shop. His name is Kobus Pekbrock, and he has been to sea in an American three-master so far that he has seen the end of the world. He can tell such stories that one might stand for hours listening to them with one's mouth wide open. He has been with his comrades in the land of the niggers, and up a mountain so high that they could wash their hands in the clouds. They had got quite close to the moon, and meant to climb higher to see what was going on there; but the air was so terribly cold that they had to fly down as quickly as ever they could, for the ends of their noses and the tips of their ears were quite frozen.'

'Come, come! you cannot believe everything you hear. Sailors know how to tell about a great many things, which are not always true.'

'Not true, mother? Why, Kobus has seen it himself! he was there! And if that is not enough, he has had other adventures which would make your hair stand on end to hear him tell about.'

'Oh, John, tell us some of them!' said Micken.

'Yes, please, John, do. I will give you half of my bread and butter to-morrow morning if you will,' added Roseken.

Very well, sisters, keep your ears wide open and

listen,' began the boy. And then he told them a wondrous tale of how Kobus and his companions had run upon what they thought was an island, but which turned out to be a fish a thousand feet long; and of all the perils and adventures they endured upon this fish, and inside it, after it had succeeded in swallowing them up.

But in the most exciting part of the whole story the door of the room suddenly opened, and a man entered. This unexpected visit was pleasant neither to the widow nor her children, for they all appeared to be struck with terror. The man was very meanly clad, and appeared to be an old sailor. He had only one arm, the right sleeve of his jacket was sewn on to the shoulder. As he entered his eyes flashed and his lips quivered with anger. Advancing a few steps nearer to the widow he exclaimed, in a rough voice,—

'Listen to me, Mrs. Boots! I am tired of this. You have kept me waiting long enough for the rent and you shall pay me. Pay me at once! if not, I will turn you early to-morrow morning out into the street, with all your goods and chattels. Yes, you may stretch out your hands, and cry out, "Oh, sir, we are so poor!" as much as you like; I am deaf, hard as a stone! Money I must have! money!'

'Oh, good landlord, only wait a week!' implored the widow. 'In two or three days I shall be able to go out and sell again, and all I earn will be for you to the very last cent.'

'It has been just the same story for the last six weeks,' cried the landlord, stamping on the floor. 'Go out selling! you, indeed? Why, good woman, how can you talk of such a thing? You are still shaking all over with weakness! Idle words! Money, hard cash, you must give me, this very evening, or you go into the street, I tell you.'

'I beg, landlord, do not speak so cruelly. Look how you make my poor children tremble. Roseken, do not cry so bitterly; and you, John, why are you sitting there, making such ugly faces? Be quiet, all of you!'

'It is lucky for him that I am not bigger than I am,' grumbled the boy; 'then I would not allow my mother to be so insulted. Well, well, I will pluck some of the feathers out of his wings!'

'Be silent, naughty boy!'

'Yes, mother, if it pleases you; you know very well. But, but—now will I be as silent as a fish.'

'All this is good for nothing,' cried the angry man. 'Tears and prayers are useless; money I must have!'

'But surely you are a Christian man, landlord?' said the widow with uplifted hands: 'can I, with my poor innocent children, and sick as I am, go and sleep upon the stones? Have another week's patience. You know that I am honest. For ten years I have lived in your house, and have I not always paid you punctually?'

'And what about the last six weeks, and next week too?'

'Before the week is out I shall be able to pay you. You know, that since the unhappy death of my husband I have worked like a slave to bring up my children, and you should have a little mercy on a poor mother!'

(To be continued.)



"Come, John, sit down here beside us, and tell us stories," begged Micken.


Chatterbox.



The Lathered Chin.

THE LATHERED CHIN.

A BALLAD FOR BOYS.

 STRAW, they say,
Will show which way
The wind-gusts come and go;
A lathered chin
Will likewise show
The mind within.

'The cat's away,
The mouse doth play,'
So runs the ancient saw;
His heart is light,
Because her paw
Is out of sight.

The King is dead;
Without a head,
The law is under feet—
All order goes,
In every street
The red blood flows.

'My dad is gone,'
So reasons John,
'And now I'll have a spec—
Ay, such a lark!
For I am free
Until it's dark!'

He hums a song,
And ponders long
Which way his course to steer;
An hour is spent
By Jack, in sheer
Embarrassment.

The musings stop—
A razor-strop!
With razor, brush, and soap!
Upon his brow
The dawn of hope
Is resting now!

'Hurrah! that's brave!
I'll have a shave;
I reckon that's the plan!'
So saying, he
His task began,
In boundless glee.

O victim green!
O razor keen!
The subtle Sheffield blade
So gashed his chin,
You might have laid
A finger in.

The razor falls;
The stripling bawls,
'Boo—oo—ow—ee—ah—ooo!'
The neighbours run,
'Boo—ow—ee—whooo!'
'Some murder's done!'

'Boo—ow—ah—o-o-o!'
'Be quiet, do,
And tell us where you're hurt;'

'Boo—ooh! just see
My bloody shirt!
How cross they'll be!'

At length, resigned
To fates unkind,
Poor Jack subdued his din;
And neighbours good
From clothes and chin
Wiped off the blood.

With tingling cheek
Jack told his freak,
And trembled as he spoke;
The silence dread
His father broke,
And thus he said:—

'That razor, Jack,
Has saved your back,
And paid the bill in cash;
Now we are quits,
And may the gash
Let in some wits!'

G. S. OUTRAM.

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Continued from page 199.)

THE SIEGE OF SZIGETH.



SZIGETH!—what an odd name. Yes; it is a Hungarian name, and they are often curiously spelt. It should be pronounced simply, 'See-get.'

Szigeth is a fortress lying in the great plain of Hungary, near the river Drave, and not far from where the Danube forms the boundary of Turkey. In old times the Turks were continually invading this country, and the people who lived there could never feel safe from the inroads of these fierce neighbours of theirs.

One day—it was towards the end of July A.D. 1566—a peasant arrived in haste at Szigeth, bearing the news that an immense army of Turks was crossing the Danube, and pouring into Hungary. He was at once brought before the commandant of the fortress to tell his story.

The commandant of Szigeth at that time was a Hungarian nobleman, Count Niklas Zriny, who had proved himself in many battles against the Turks a brave and faithful defender of his country. He was now *Ban*, or governor of Croatia, under the Emperor of Germany,* as well as commandant of the Hungarian garrison of Szigeth.

Szigeth consisted of a new and an old town, both fortified; the old town was the highest part, being built on one of the little hills which here and there break the level of the great Hungarian plain; and in its midst was the castle or citadel, where Zriny lived with his wife and daughter.

The peasant's tidings made a great stir in the town. He had seen the whole array of the Turkish army pass through Belgrade with great pomp. The old Sultan, Soliman the Great, who was reigning at

* The Emperor Maximilian II. was King of Hungary in right of his mother.

that time, had spent the chief part of his life in making war on Christian nations. He had once besieged Vienna, but had been defeated and driven away from before it; and the great wish of his heart was to get that city into his possession, and subdue the German Empire. Now he was making one last effort in his old age to gain this object. His fierce hordes were soon ravaging the border country, burning the villages, and plundering and killing the people wherever they came. Zriny, when he heard of this, sent out a small band of his brave Hungarians, who fell upon a portion of the Turkish army and defeated it with great loss.

But now the whole power of the enemy was suddenly turned against Szigeth. The Sultan had heard of Zriny's fame, and was determined to subdue him; and he resolved not to march on Vienna till Szigeth had fallen.

When Zriny first perceived that the town must stand a siege, he thought of sending away his wife and daughter to a place of safety. But Helen had been lately betrothed to one of Zriny's captains, Lorenz Juranitsch, and both she and her mother entreated to be allowed to stay and share the danger of those they loved. Zriny at last, knowing that the castle had a secret underground way of escape, by which, if things came to the worst, he could send them out, consented to their remaining.

Soon the plain around the little town was white with the tents of the Turkish camp; 200,000 Moslems compassed the brave little band about, resolved on their destruction. From the towers of the castle, the Countess Zriny, with her daughter Helen, could see the vast array of the besieging army, the horse-tails floating from before the tents of the pachas, and the golden crescent gleaming above the pavilion of the Sultan.

But just before the town was quite invested by the Turks, a Hungarian officer, followed by a few horse-men, rode in hot haste into the court of the citadel. He came from the Emperor, and brought tidings of the army which was hurriedly assembling near Vienna, gathered from all parts of Christendom, to bid defiance to the invader, from Poland, England, Italy, France, and all parts of Germany; for the news that old Soliman was preparing for war again had sped through Europe some time ago. Zriny's only son was with this army, serving in the Emperor's body-guard. The messenger brought also a letter from the Emperor to Count Zriny. They had heard at Vienna, it seemed, that Szigeth was likely to be besieged; and the Emperor said in this letter that he feared that he should not be able to send a force for its relief, and that Zriny must not therefore count on any succour from without. His army was as yet too weak, he said, and was required for the defence of Vienna. The Emperor added that he knew Zriny and his valiant followers well enough to be assured that they would hold out nobly to the last man, remembering that every day's delay caused by the siege was so much gain to the cause of the country, by keeping back the enemy, and giving the Christian army time to assemble.

Zriny was alone when he read this letter. He understood its purport well; but he did not shrink from the doom before him. He held himself honoured

by the confidence of his sovereign, and resolved to show himself worthy of it.

On the evening of that day he assembled all the garrison of Szigeth in the court of the castle; they numbered not more than a thousand men. Standing on a flight of steps, he spoke to them of the time of trial that was before them. He did not conceal the truth from them, or raise false hopes. He told them that the whole great Turkish host was even now drawing round them for their destruction—that the Emperor was indeed assembling an army at Raab, but was not yet strong enough to promise succour to Szigeth. 'Therefore,' said Zriny, 'he trusts to us, and to our fidelity—trusts that we shall be willing to give our lives, if need be, for the defence of our country and of our holy faith. Fear not the overwhelming power of the enemy. If there are hundreds of them to one man of us, God is with us, and His holy angels; therefore let us be strong and fear nothing. For us throughout all Christendom the people are kneeling in prayer—for we are the defenders of all; we are in the fore-front of the battle, called upon first to bear its brunt. Let not one among us fail now in the high duty to which we are appointed.'

And then Zriny called upon all present to take a solemn oath that they would be faithful unto death to the Christian faith, to their sovereign, and their country. All the garrison, sharing the spirit of their chief, repeated this oath after him with drawn swords.

Thus did the men of Szigeth prepare for what was before them.

It was the 3rd of August when the siege began. The Turks, whose chief object was to capture the town without delay, that they might march on Vienna before the Emperor was ready for them, attempted at once to take the place by storm; but they found this was not so easy. Again and again Soliman's fierce janissaries were repulsed when in the act of scaling the walls, by the heroic little garrison; and the Hungarians too, made sally after sally, scattering the besiegers and causing them great loss.

Szigeth was indeed standing as a rock, on which the waves of that mighty flood broke in vain,—the advanced post of Christendom, holding back and arresting for awhile the tide of Moslem conquest.

In one of the sallies a Hungarian captain, named Vilacky, was wounded and made prisoner. He was brought before the Sultan, who sat in Eastern state in his gorgeous green pavilion, which glittered with precious stones.

'Who art thou?' asked Soliman.

'A Hungarian and a Christian,' replied the prisoner, 'and thus doubly an object of thy hatred.'

'Thinkest thou that I condescend to hate a single enemy?' said the Sultan, scornfully. 'But if thou wouldst save thy life, tell me truthfully, how stands it now with Szigeth?'

'Storm it,' answered Vilacky, 'and you can easily find that out for yourselves.'

'Dog of a Christian!' exclaimed a bystander, and another Turk added with a blow,—

'Slave! dost thou thus answer the Prince of the Faithful?'

'Thou mayest be his slave,' quietly replied the



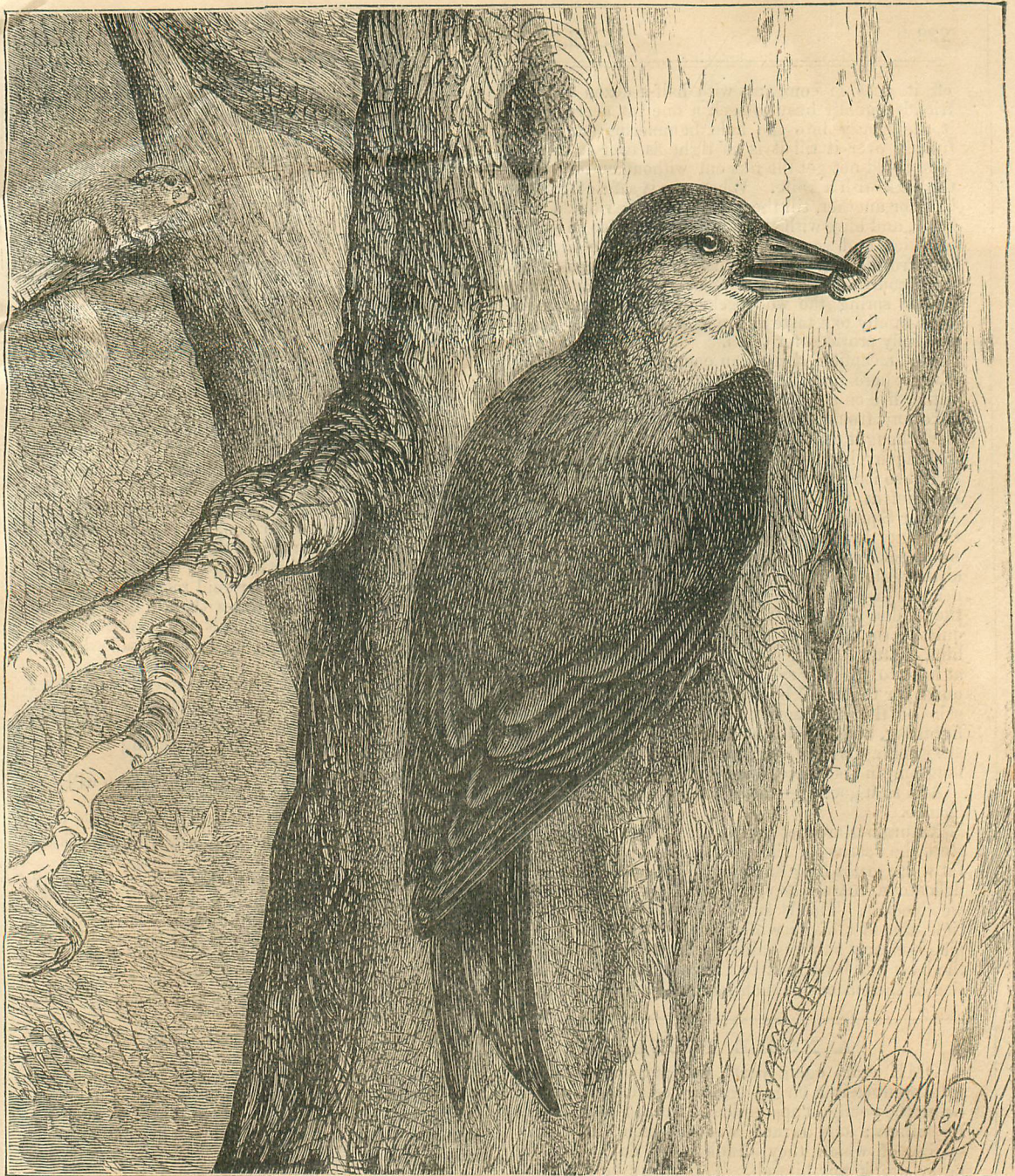
The Hungarian Captain before the Sultan.

prisoner: 'I am not. A free Hungarian bends only before God and his king.'

Soliman was rather pleased with his bold answers; but threatened him with torture and death if he would not reply to the questions put to him about Szigeth, its garrison, and stores. No threats, however, could extort any information about the fortress

from the brave Vilacky. All he would say was that he counselled the Sultan to raise the siege at once; for it was fated that his fortune should be broken against the walls of Szigeth. The Sultan spared his life; whether he afterwards regained his liberty is uncertain.

(Concluded in our next.)



THE PROVIDENT WOODPECKER.

PEOPLE who are fond of watching the habits of birds and beasts in their natural state often make very curious discoveries.

We have all seen the bee store her honey, the spider spin his web, and the dog hide his bone—their way of providing dinner for to-morrow—but only those who have crossed the wide sea, and wandered

in the great American forests, have witnessed the process by which the Californian woodpecker stores its food; and as this is somewhat remarkable, I mean to tell you about it.

First, it chooses its larder—a good big tree of the sort called the yellow pine—and then it *sets to work* to bore a deep hole in the bark. When this is made,

off it goes in company with half-a-dozen or so, of friends, equally busy to seek a fine fat acorn, which it fits neatly into the hole, hammering at it, and fussing over it till it is as tight as ever it can be. You could not get the nut out without cutting away the bark with a knife. When one is safe, off flies the bird for another, till the yellow pine is riddled with holes, and alive with these little black birds in yellow neckties and scarlet caps, for this is the livery of the Provident Woodpecker, as they have been called.

Of course all this takes place in the autumn, and in the spring the woodpecker means to treat his little family to a taste of the excellent food he has so carefully provided for them.

But, meantime, there is an enemy to guard against. Everywhere may be found lazy people who would rather live on the fruits of other folks' industry than take any trouble themselves, but you would hardly have thought that, in the American forests, the busy little squirrel would have earned this character.

But so it is: perhaps there is a little love of fun and mischief at the bottom of it, but, certainly, when Master Squirrel is disturbed in his snug nest inside the pine, by the knocking and hammering of the woodpeckers, he pops his head out of his hole, peers about with his sharp little eyes, makes a dash at the nearest larder, and with claws and teeth drag out the hidden acorn. Of course this is not to be borne quietly, so the woodpecker and his friends rush at him, chattering out, 'Thief! Robber!' and intending at least to peck his eyes out; but the squirrel is too quick for them: off he goes with his booty, down one side of the tree and up the other like a flash of lightning, and into his hole, while the yellow throats are swelling with anger, and the little freebooter is laughing in his sleeve, or rather in his bushy tail.

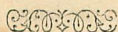
And so it goes on—the squirrel waiting for another chance.

Naturalists are not quite sure if the woodpeckers store the acorns for their own sake, or for the nice fat white grubs they harbour, which no doubt are as delicate a morsel as spring chickens to the young woodpecker. This is still to be proved; but, meantime, the fact of its really burying the nuts in the pine is clearly substantiated, and a well-bored piece of the bark has been sent to England for the satisfaction of the curious in such matters. H. A. F.

A NOBLE YOUTH.

SOME years ago a youth was put out as an apprentice in a large engineer's establishment, and being the youngest apprentice he had to go on errands for others; one errand was to fetch the ardent spirits, of which they drank every day. But he never drank any himself. The others laughed and ridiculed him because, as they said, he was 'not man enough to drink rum.' He keenly felt their abuse, but he held firm; and is at present owner of a large estate, which he has acquired by industry, and saving his earnings instead of squandering them for liquors.

He leads a happy life, and is doing a vast amount of good; while every one of his fellow-apprentices is a drunkard, or lies in a drunkard's grave.



A SAILOR'S FAMILY.

(Continued from page 215.)



SEEMINGLY the man was touched by the earnest entreaty of the widow, and shook his head doubtfully; but suddenly he withstood his better feelings and said,—

'No, I will have no excuses! you must pay or turn out to-morrow morning! Yes, Mrs. Boots, I know well that you are unfortunate, but am I rich? I only gain twelve francs a-week, less than a porter earns on the wharf. My wife is silly and half a cripple. I am old and maimed, and cannot work. For the last fortnight we

have been suffering hunger and been eating only dry bread, because you won't pay us. This cannot go on any longer, and it shall not! We can't bear the burdens of other people. Yes, be sure of it, Mrs. Boots, that if in tears you crept on your knees before me I would not listen to you, for my innocent wife is poorer and more wretched than you are!'

'This has lasted long enough!' shouted the boy, suddenly springing up. 'I would rather be devoured by the fishes a thousand times than that you should continue to ill-treat and insult my mother.' And lowering his arms he ran up to the landlord, stood before him, and said,—

'You will drive us into the street, will you? Come now, I tell you we won't go out!'

'Go to bed, you impudent young rascal!' said the man with contempt: 'how are you going to hinder me from turning you out of doors?'

'How? I shall pay you, and what more will you have to say then?'

'You pay me, indeed! I shall have to wait long enough for that!' said the landlord, with a mocking laugh.

'No, this very evening, or early to-morrow morning at the latest. The English steamboat is lying close to the wharf, I shall become the cook's boy. Adrian has promised me ten francs down to begin with, and I shall have every month —'

The widow, who had listened to her son with the deepest anguish, had jumped up and placed her hand upon his mouth.

He struggled to speak, and cried with broken words, 'Yes, mother, it is done now. I am going to sea—to sea! and I shall earn money for you and for the brutal fellow here; and —'

'Fie, John! be silent! be silent!' said Anne-Mie; 'the man has a just right to it: you are out of your senses, unhappy boy!'

'It may be, mother, but go to sea. I will, and that is all right. For my mother I will risk anything. Yes, to-morrow I shall be the cook's boy on board Adrian's steamboat!'

With a cry of anguish the widow pressed her son in her arms.

'Alas! John dear,' she sobbed, 'do not kill me with fright! Think of your father and his unhappy death! Look at my tears! Come, have pity on your sick mother; go and sit down on your chair again and be quiet, I implore you!'

The boy, overcome by his mother's agitation, returned with slow steps to the table, but murmuring to himself on the way,—

'Anything that will give you pleasure, you know, that I will do. Oh, that I were bigger!'

Anne-Mie turned to the landlord and implored his forgiveness for the rude conduct of her son: tears stood in the man's eyes, and he replied,—

'I am not angry with your boy, Anne-Mie; he has a good heart in his breast: I wish he were my son. But all this is of no use. Want, bitter want, forces me. I cannot do otherwise. Money, or to-morrow the street.'

The widow gazed at him sadly for a while.

'It must be so then,' she murmured, with a deep sigh. 'Cruel fate deprives me of the last pledge! I will give you something for a respite.'

She went into the other room and returned with a gold ring in her hand, which she handed to the man. With tears in her eyes she said,—

'Landlord, this is my wedding ring, the only treasure I possess on earth. Rather than offer you this memorial I would have paid you in my blood, but you are also unfortunate. Sell the ring—it is worth quite eight francs, and next week I will give you all I have earned by selling mussels.'

The man shook his head and remained silent for a moment.

'Take the ring, landlord,' said the widow, calmly: 'you will be able now to grant me a little delay.'

But the man drew back his hand and said, in a choking voice,—

'Anne-Mie, good woman! you think I have a cruel heart, don't you? Yes, I came here with the firm resolve not to hear a word from you, but your wedding ring I will not take. Listen to me. I will give you one week more—even though I have to suffer from hunger: but be quite sure of this, that then you will be obliged to turn out without any mercy unless you can give me a payment of five francs at least.'

'Yes, I will promise you that, landlord.'

'Good evening, then, Anne-Mie, and I hope that God will have pity upon you and upon us.'

'Thank you, thank you, good man! We shall pray for you.'

The widow, released from the terror which had tortured her for the last few days, sat down to the table again and resumed her work; she comforted her little girls, and reproved John in words which breathed more love than anger.

'Yes, children, she said at last, 'I feel myself strong: to-morrow, perhaps, I shall be able to go out and sell again, and earn some money once more.'

'May I go with you, mother?' asked Micken. 'I will help you.'

'And I too, mother?' added Roseken.

'Yes, children, you may both go with me. It will be a change for you. But now you must go to bed.'

'Oh, mother dear, it is too early yet,' murmured Micken. 'Only a quarter of an hour—a little longer!'

'No, much longer,' cried Roseken. 'Do, John, go on with your story.'

'Yes, I want to know how it fared with Kobus Pekbrock,' said the eldest girl: 'you left him and his ship in great danger.'

The mother allowed John to finish his marvellous tale, in which mermaids and sea-serpents bore a wonderful part. But it lasted so long that his youngest sister sank down asleep with her head on the table, and the speaker himself began to yawn.

The widow stopped his story, and said,—

'Come, children, we shall have to get up early, and I need rest that I may be strong to-morrow. We must go to bed.'

'Oh, mother dear, only a few minutes more!' begged Micken.

'No! no! John shall finish his story to-morrow. Come, wake up, Roseken.'

She took up the lamp and went, followed by her children, into the other room. There they all knelt down for a few moments, and after they had prayed each kissed the edge of the sou'-wester.

'Good-night, mother,' said the lad, embracing her. The widow pressed her son in her arms, and murmured in a tone in which love and pride were mingled,—

'Sleep well, John! sleep well, my good, my brave boy!'

The lad went into the furthest room, where his bed stood. A moment after, the widow Boots blew out the light.

CHAPTER II.

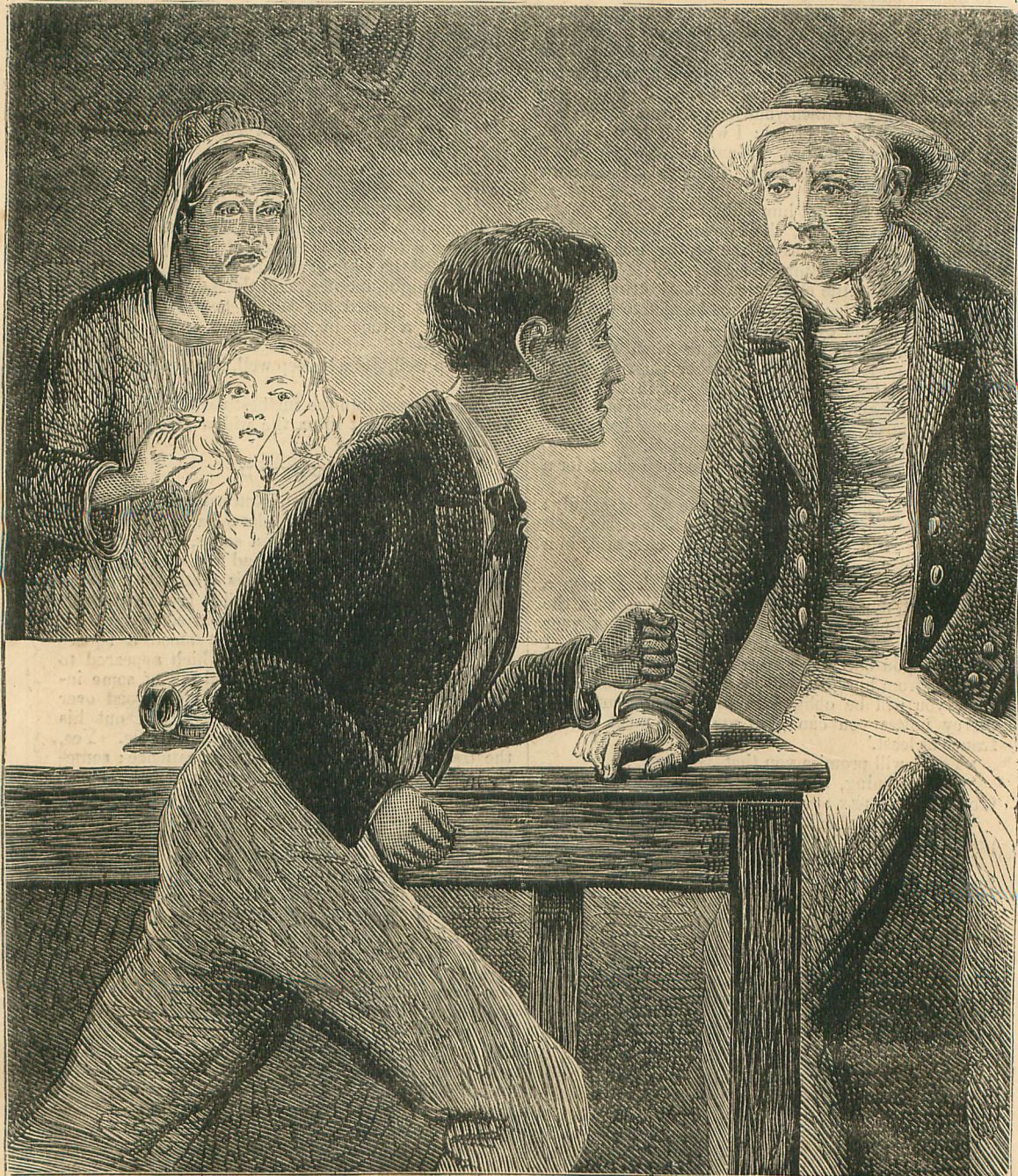
ON the railroad between Rotterdam and Antwerp a man was sitting quite alone in a second-class carriage. He seemed to be a sailor, who, as he was making a journey on land, had put on his Sunday best; for although humble, his clothes were very clean and neat. Judging from his bronzed face he must have come from India, or from some very hot country. Near him in the seat stood a square bundle covered with linen, and which appeared to be a birdcage. This man seemed full of some inward joy: his eyes glistened, a smile passed over his lips, and now and then he stretched out his hands as if he wished to embrace some one. Yes, the train went too slowly for his impatience; sometimes he stood up and stamped with his feet, as if he wished thereby to hasten his journey. Now and then, when he had sat down again upon the bench, a painful expression would come over his face. His eyes filled with tears and his look became sad, but he soon shook his head with energy: the bright smile again played round his mouth, and he raised his eyes to Heaven, as if to thank God for some mercy.

The train had stopped at Esschen. When the signal for starting again was given two fresh travellers jumped into the carriage, and sat down opposite the sailor, whom they surveyed in silence for a while. These men were doubtless cattle-dealers or graziers; at least their bright blue smocks, and the strong sticks with leather cords which they carried, would lead one to suppose so. They began to talk together, but that the sailor might not understand them they spoke in a very low voice.

Suddenly they looked at the seaman in amazement. Why did he cry Anniken deaf? Was he drunk, or out of his senses?

The sailor seemed amused at their wonder.

(To be continued.)



The landlord pressing for his rent.

Chatterbox.



John Boots in the railway carriage on his way home.



A SAILOR'S FAMILY.

(Continued from page 223.)

YOU are dreaming and talking in your sleep, comrade,' said one of the graziers: 'your Anneken can't surely be running on alongside of the railroad?'

'It is my Jacko, the lovely fellow!' answered the sailor as he raised the linen covering from the cage and displayed a handsome cockatoo. No sooner had the bird seen the light than he raised his tuft and cried out in a rough, manly voice, 'Good morning, Anneken dear! here is John!'

'Fine bird! he talks really like a man!' said one of the graziers. 'Will you sell him?'

'Sell him? No, not for 50*l.* sterling!'

'I understand that,' said the grazier, jokingly: 'the sailor has brought the bird from the East Indies for his "Anneken dear."'

'Yes, yes, sir,' answered the sailor, with strange pride in his eyes: 'for my Anneken dear is my wife—my good, brave Anne-Mie, and my heart beats within me for impatience to clasp her in my arms; for it is eight years,—eight long years, since I have seen her! Ah, how big my children must have grown! and my John, the droll little fellow, must now be strong enough to go to sea! and my Mieken, and Roseken, the little curly-head! How will they look? They must all think that I am dead. Eight years without hearing anything of me! God knows what their lot has been during all this time. If they are only well—'

'Yes, that is the question,' remarked the grazier. 'In eight years many people die: and now, with the terrible diseases of typhus, small-pox, and cholera, one is never safe from one day to the other. My next-door neighbour has lost his wife and three children in six months' time.'

A deep sigh rose from the seaman's breast, and he bent his head down very low, as if to conceal the anguish which had suddenly come over him.

'Come, friend, you must not be too ready to believe the worst,' said the other grazier to him with compassion: 'very probably you will find your wife and children quite well. Such misfortunes as that of which my comrade has spoken are rare.'

'Ah! I thank you, sir,' murmured the sailor: 'you do not know what good you have done me!'

'But,' asked the first cattle-dealer, 'how comes it that you, who seem to love your wife and children, have let them be without tidings of you for eight years? This seems to me no great proof of affection.'

'How could I have done so? I have been in prison for seven years in the island of Borneo. We were shipwrecked there, and the savages sold me for a slave to a king in the interior.'

'That is plain enough now, comrade; but may not your wife, thinking you to be dead, have married another man? We have seen such things.'

The sailor gazed at him with a sharp look. 'My Anne-Mie, the mother of my children, marry another

man!' he exclaimed. 'Well, well, I would as soon believe that the Scheldt could be dried up!'

'Well, it is quite possible that you may be lucky, friend. But what happened—now two years ago—here in Antwerp? There was a sailor's wife, she lived in the Winkel Street—'

'In the Winkel Street?' groaned the sailor, in terror.

'Just as I say, comrade.'

'My name is John Boots; surely, sir, you are not speaking of my wife?'

'Her name is unknown to me.'

'And she is married?'

'Her husband had been many years away,' continued the grazier; 'she had heard nothing of him, for the ship in which he sailed had perished somewhere in the East Indies with all on board. Instead of mourning for him all her life long, she has taken up with another man and married him. Come, come, comrade! what is the matter with you? Don't let what I have told you turn your head!'

While the grazier was speaking, the sailor had put his hand in the sack, and brought out a large knife with a leather sheath. Without taking any heed of his companions, he tried the point of the knife in his finger; then put the terrible weapon back again into the sack, and murmuring something stared upon the ground.

The graziers looked anxiously at each other, but did not say anything. The train now stopped at Capellen. The graziers, delighted to be able to escape from the dangerous company of the savage sailor, jumped out of the train, which soon continued its way. For some time John Boots restrained his sufferings; then tears stood in his eyes, and he murmured,—

'In the Winkel Street? a sailor's wife? Ah, it is not possible! My Anne-Mie! too good, too loving, too faithful! But if it were so, oh, to think that I have been sighing for eight years for the moment when I could press her again to my heart. I would rather die ten times over than find her married to another man. That she should have given a step-father to my children! Shameful! dreadful! No, no, my Anne-Mie loves me too much—Who knows? who knows?'

He took out his knife again, and gazed at it for a long time. At last his face brightened up, and he murmured with a sigh as he passed his hand over his forehead, 'Such tortures will drive me mad! Blood? Why? The man is innocent. I should cover my children with disgrace. Alas! nothing will remain to me but to go to sea again, never to return; and to go on sailing and sailing till God at last lets me die in some far-off land!'

Tears rolled down his cheeks, but he succeeded in resisting his own thoughts, struck himself a heavy blow with his fist on his breast, and cried angrily, 'Why, John Boots, have you become a fool or a madman? Should you, upon the bare word of an unknown man, accuse your good Anne-Mie of such a deed? Don't you remember her vows, her love, her tears?'

'Good morning, Anneken dear!' cried the parrot,

'Yes, yes, Anneken dear,' repeated John Boots, 'To-day still I shall call her so! I shall again feel her true and loving heart beat against mine. And

my children, my good children, it seems to me as if they were riding on my knees, kissing me and stroking me as they did on the evening before my departure!

He stretched out his arms and smiled, his eyes beaming with love and tenderness. But soon after his face was again overshadowed, and bending down his head he murmured in terror, 'It was in the Winkel Street—a sailor's wife! O God! if such a dagger is to stab my heart, why must I remain alive?'

He again fell into painful ponderings, from which he was only aroused by the voice of the guard, who announced to the travellers that the train had reached Antwerp.

John Boots seized the bird-cage and jumped to the ground. Driven by his anxious impatience he ran through the crowd, without heeding anything, and turned towards the city.

A few minutes after he crossed the Cattle-market, and reached the Winkel Street.

He stepped into an alley, and knocked at a door on the left-hand side.

No one answered him, but the door yielded to the pressure of his shoulder, and he entered the room which he had formerly inhabited, and where he had passed so many happy days with his wife and children. With his hand on his beating heart he eagerly surveyed all that surrounded him. He saw, indeed, hanging on the wall, children's clothes and a woman's shawl; before the bed stood a pair of worn-out shoes, which plainly belonged to a young lad: but nothing betrayed the presence of a man. A cry of joy escaped him; he put the bird-cage down on the table, and, with a smile of happiness, he went to the wall, touched the clothes which hung there with trembling hands, and murmured, almost beside himself,—

'No, no, thank God! it was not true! No one has forgotten me here! She is poor, I well perceive that: she has suffered; but she has remained true to me. Ah! this is a jacket of my Micken! This is a frock of my dear Roseken! Those boy's shoes are my John's! They are all alive. God has preserved them to me!'

And he kissed the clothes, and pressed the shoes to his heart, till, quite overcome by his emotion, he sank down on a chair, and silently raised his hands to Heaven. He did not remain sitting here long. He rose, and went into the other room.

But here he had a terrible blow. When he turned his eyes to the alcove his hair almost stood on end, and he burst into a terrible rage.

'Her bed? her cloak?—and close by a south-wester, a man's hat? Ah! she has forgotten me, betrayed me! I am hers no longer!'

A new torture now took possession of his mind; he seized the south-wester, put it on his own head, threw it angrily to the ground, and burst out in all the agony of despair,—

'It is not my boy's—a head still larger than mine! What shall I do? My knife! No, no, let me fly. Must I see her—her and her husband, and suffer a double misfortune? And my innocent children! Alas, poor things!'

He heard a noise on the stairs, and looked up.

'Some one is coming, I think,' he muttered; 'away from this in haste!'

But then the door was opened. An old woman entered the room, and looked at him with amazement.

'Who are you?' cried the sailor. 'What are you doing here?'

'My name is Theresa Spas, and I live upstairs,—above this room,' was the reply.

'Then you know my wife?'

'Your wife? Why! then you are John Boots! Know Anne-Mie, indeed! why, I am her best friend!'

'She has married again, has she not?'

Theresa shook her head in denial.

'Not? Surely you are mistaken! A man is certainly living in this house. I know it!'

'What man? What do you mean?' asked the old woman, in wonder.

The sailor stamped with his foot on the south-wester, and grumbled out,—

'There! there lies the proof of it!'

Raising up her head Theresa said, with indignation,—

'The south-wester? That is John Boots', which he forgot before his departure. Anne-Mie has kept it as a memorial of him, and hung it at the place where she says her prayers.'

'Eh? eh? What are you saying, then?' gasped out the sailor, with a vacant smile, trembling and starting backwards.

'And look, John Boots, look on the rim of the hat at that worn place. There every evening, after a prayer for you, your wife and children have imprinted a loving kiss; with their lips they have worn away the hat.'

The sailor rushed up to her with a cry of joy, threw his arms round her neck, pressed her to his heart, kissed her, and muttered words of gratitude and happiness.

His arms relaxed, he seemed to have overcome his violent excitement; tottering, he went up to a chair, and sank down upon it gasping for breath.

(Concluded in our next.)

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Concluded from page 220.)



THE siege went on; and now the Turks employed their heaviest artillery against the fortress; but though some breaches were made in the walls of the new town, the end seemed no nearer. The furious attacks of the Turks were one after another repulsed by the resolute bravery of the garrison.

Soliman became exceedingly impatient and angry that 'a handful of Hungarians crept into a mouse-hole,' as he expressed it, should thus arrest the progress of his army; but he deemed it a point of honour not to move until Szigeth had fallen. He therefore determined to send his Grand Vizier to treat with Zriny about terms of surrender.

Meanwhile Count Zriny had come to the conclu-

sion that it was impossible any longer to hold the new town, on account of the diminished numbers of the garrison, and the breaches which the Turkish cannon had made in the walls. He might still be able to hold the old town with the castle, if the new town were burnt to the ground. This, however, he was very reluctant to do; for he pitied the townspeople, who would lose their homes and possessions. He had given orders that they should have warning to remove such of their goods as they could into the old town, and that torches should be in readiness to set the new town on fire in several places, at a moment's notice, if necessary. As he was standing at a window of the castle, looking sadly down on the roofs of the doomed dwellings, which were soon to be happy homes no longer, it was announced to him that a Turkish Pacha had arrived with a flag of truce, and desired speech with him.

Zriny was surprised when he found that his visitor was the Grand Vizier, Mehmed Pacha, in person, and he judged that his mission must be a very important one.

The Turk began with polite speeches, complimenting Count Zriny on his gallant defence, and then summoned him in the Sultan's name to surrender, reminding him that it was quite impossible he could hold out much longer; that very soon Szigeth *must* fall, and that if taken by storm, a general massacre would follow, whereas, if it surrendered at once, the Sultan would give favourable terms.

'If that is all you have come to say, Vizier,' replied Zriny, 'you might have spared yourself this errand. It is my intention to hold this town as long as I possibly can. In so doing, I am acting by the commands of my sovereign, and the Sultan cannot possibly expect from me that I should be such a traitor as to surrender contrary to my orders. How Soliman will deal with the place when he *has* stormed it, that is not my affair; there is another Who will reckon with him on that score.'

'Think of your wife and child,' pleaded the Vizier; 'will you not save them from a cruel death?'

But Zriny's resolution was not to be shaken.

'My master does not ask the fortress of you for nothing,' continued the Turk. 'I am empowered to say that he offers you Croatia as an hereditary kingdom, and as much treasure besides as you may demand from him. He will promote you to all honour, and treat you as his friend and ally.'

At these words Zriny flushed with anger.

'Do you dare to offer a bribe to Niklas Zriny?' he exclaimed. 'Go, tell your Sultan, a Hungarian counts his honour worth more than a crown. He may slay me and my people, but my honour he must leave me, his power reaches not to *that*.'

'If, then, nothing else can move you, hear what I have still to say. Your son was brought in as a prisoner by a band of our cavalry lately. If you do not surrender without delay, the Sultan swears that unheard-of tortures shall be invented, to put him to death by slow degrees, and he must suffer for the obstinacy of his father.'

'My son George!' burst forth Zriny, turning away for a moment. 'O God, Thy hand is heavy,' he murmured.

Mehmed Pacha thought his object was gained.

'Decide!' he urged; 'our torturers are skilled in fearful arts.'

'There is nothing to decide,' replied Zriny, firmly as before. 'My son will know how to die; he dies for his faith and country.'

And then calling to one of his captains who waited in the ante-chamber, he gave the order to 'fire the new town.'

The Sultan's emissary was forced to give up all further attempts to shake Zriny's resolve, and before he had left the castle, the flames were rising from the town, announcing to the camp of the besiegers that determined resistance was still the watchword of Szigeth.

Zriny had planned to send away his wife and daughter when he saw the case hopeless, by an underground passage, which had an outlet some way off; and now the time for this seemed to have come. But messengers sent to examine it, found the opening was not safe. All around it the villages were burnt; there was no shelter to be had, and the Turks were swarming in the neighbourhood. It was too late to escape; but the Countess and Helen were not sorry; *now* they could not be separated from those they loved.

The Turkish fire became more and more heavy and increasing; the castle was struck, and portions of its walls began to give way. Soon there was no safe place left in it for the ladies, and they were obliged to take refuge in the cellars. Here, in a dim vault, faintly lighted by lanterns, and provided with a few necessary articles of furniture, they sat together, listening to the sounds of the cannonade overhead. They were quite resigned to their fate, and the mother comforted and encouraged her young daughter.

At last came the fatal day when Zriny was forced to tell them that he could hold the castle only one day longer, and that they must prepare for the worst. He and Juranitsch came to the cellar with these tidings; but no weak lamentations were heard at that parting scene. They kept up each other's hearts with words of Christian faith and hope, and the thought that they should die at the same time, and be reunited in the eternal world, comforted and strengthened them all.

It was on the morning of the 8th of September, that Zriny assembled his brave little band, now reduced to six hundred, in the court of the castle. They were going forth to certain death, and they knew it. Zriny's plan was to make a last sally, now that the ruined walls could no longer hold back the enemy. He himself, it was noticed, wore no defensive armour that day, but was dressed as for a festival. The keys of the fortress, which he deemed it his duty not to part from except with his life, were fastened in his girdle. His wife came for a last farewell of him, and some whispered words were exchanged between them as they embraced each other. Helen was not with her mother. No one but Juranitsch knew the cause of her absence. When at their parting he had lingered behind with her, she had entreated him, as death was so certain, to give it to her with his own hand, instead of leaving her to the fury of the Sultan's janissaries, and after a struggle with himself, he had yielded to



Zriny taking a last farewell of his wife.

her wish. He had stabbed his fair young bride to the heart, and her body lay covered by a flag in an inner recess of the vault.

Zriny said a few last words to his men; thanked them for their fidelity; exhorted them to die bravely, and to count it honour and joy to fall in so holy a cause. Then an old gun loaded with pieces of broken iron was fired from the gate. Its explosion scattered the foremost of the Turks, who were

advancing with yells to the attack, and under cover of the smoke, the remnant of Szigeth's defenders sallied forth,—Juranitsch, by Zriny's side, bearing the banner of the empire.

They rushed into the midst of the enemy, and were slain to a man, fighting desperately. But as the Turks, pressing forward over the drawbridge, were about eagerly to take possession of their dearly-purchased prize at last, there was a fearful explo-

sion, a great pillar of smoke, filled with fragments, rose from Szigeth, and when it cleared away, the citadel was a blackened heap of ruins. The Countess Zriny had thrown a lighted torch into the powder-magazine.

The old Sultan did not live to rejoice in this barren conquest. His strength had been failing him for some time: anger and vexation at the obstinate defence of Szigeth hastened his end, and he died a few days before the final storm.

His death was studiously concealed from his army till after Szigeth had fallen. Then the Vizier gave orders for the instant breaking up of the camp, and the Turkish host returned to Belgrade, where Soliman's son, Selim II. was proclaimed Sultan.

Thus the German Empire was saved from invasion, and the heroes of Szigeth had not died in vain.

A. F. G.

THE MARMOT.



PEPOLI was a poor labourer in the mountainous country of Savoy. The whole of this region is barren, and when a Savoyard says he is poor, he must be poor indeed. And Pepoli was so poor, that with the hardest work he could scarcely earn enough bread for his wife and seven children.

Joseph, Pepoli's eldest boy, saw the great distress and anxious cares of his parents, and his heart bled, because he

was still too weak and too young to bear a portion of the burden. He was full, indeed, of good resolutions, but to carry them out was the difficult matter. On a sand-hill in the neighbourhood of his parents' cottage Joseph had captured a couple of marmots, which he took home with him, and had tamed so that they ran after him everywhere like two little dogs. He was so fond of the animals, that he felt it quite hard to part with them. As he had nothing better to do, the idea came into his head to teach them all manner of tricks.

In this he succeeded quicker and better than he had hoped. They only wanted speech, he said, to be just like human beings, so clever were they.

All were delighted with the marmots, and even the serious father amused himself with them when he came home tired after a hard day's work.

One day a neighbour said to the boy,—

'Joseph, your marmots are so clever, that you might go with them to Paris, and get some money by showing them there.'

The merry boy was struck by this idea. He thought of it over and over again, and at last made up his mind to turn the neighbour's joking remark into real action. So he began at once to construct a cage for his marmots as well as he could, in which he prepared a soft bed for them. To this cage he fastened a cord, by which he could carry it.

With a thick knotted stick in his hand, and the

cage over his shoulders, he appeared one morning before his astonished parents, and told them that he was going to Paris to earn some money with the two marmots.

'It is hard enough for you,' said he, 'to get bread for us children, so it is no more than fair that I should help you.'

Both father and mother tried to dissuade him from the plan, but Joseph had made up his mind, and he would not give it up. At last then they gave him their blessing, and in God's name allowed him to depart.

Barefoot the boy wandered forth into the wide world. Where Paris lay, and which road he ought to take to reach it, he knew not, but this troubled him very little.

In the next village he at once began to exhibit his marmots and to sing the Savoyard songs which he had learned from his mother. To the good peasants the sight was a novel one, so they were greatly delighted with it, and not only gave him plenty to eat, but a few coppers as well, which he carefully put away in a particular corner of his cage. This good beginning gave him courage, so now he wandered on singing and showing the tricks of his pets from one village to another, till after a long journey he reached the Rhine, where the people spoke a language which was strange to him. His stock of money had been greatly increased, and as he found kind people everywhere, who gave him food and did not want to be paid for it, he sent the whole sum he had collected by a good opportunity to his dear parents.

The further he went from home the more did the language and the manners of the people alter, and the greater was his desire to be again united to his family; but the thought that at home he should only be a burden, while away he was being of use to his parents, kept up his spirits, and so he wandered on in spite of sorrow and home-sickness, far away across the Rhine into Germany.

Every time he left a large city he sent a pretty little sum of money home, and at the same time he got some one who knew how to write to add a short letter with it.

'I will keep no money for myself,' thought the good son and brother, 'for at home they have great need of it, and I might become quite lazy and idle if in time I had collected a great sum of money.'

At last he arrived in France. But here a great misfortune befell him. Though he kept his marmots as tenderly as a mother does her infants, one of them became ill and died in a few days.

Joseph was very sad for a few days; he could no longer sing his songs, and he thought of returning at once to his home. But he plucked up courage again when he thought of his parents and brothers and sisters, to whom he must bring help, and so he continued his journey again.

Winter had gone and come again, when at last he reached Paris, the city for the sake of which so long ago he had left his fatherland. It seemed as if his marmot knew the importance of the place, for he performed his tricks better than ever. This gave Joseph fresh courage; he sang so loud that his voice was heard far down the streets. And his odd

foreign ways pleased the Parisians so much, that sous fell like snow-flakes into his hat.

One day he was summoned into the house of a grand gentleman, whose children wished to see the animal and its tricks closer. They were quite delighted with it, and exclaimed over and over again,—

‘Father, father, buy us the marmot!’

At first he would not hear of such a thing, but when he saw how his children were bent upon it he said to Joseph,—

‘If you give me the animal I will fill your hat with silver pieces.’

‘Then my parents would indeed be helped once for all,’ shouted the Savoyard, jumping up for joy. Then suddenly he became silent as he thought, ‘It is indeed much money—very much, and in a whole year I could not earn so large a sum, but—’

‘Well,’ said the gentleman, ‘what are you thinking about so dolefully? and why don’t you answer me?’

‘Alas!’ replied Joseph, ‘I love my marmot so much I cannot part from him! I fear, too, lest the children should not treat it well. If it should be sick or die! I would rather remain poor than—’

‘Oh, make yourself easy,’ said the gentleman. ‘I promise you that it shall be well taken care of, and no harm shall be done to it.’

Then Joe’s eyes brightened again through his tears. ‘I will let you have it, good sir,’ he said, ‘but you must allow me to come once a-week to see it.’

‘That I will grant with pleasure,’ was the comforting reply.

When Joseph saw his hat full of franc pieces the tears came into his eyes again, but then he kissed his marmot quickly and turned to go.

‘What are you going to do in Paris now?’ asked the gentleman.

‘I shall look out for some situation,’ replied Joseph, ‘in order to make a little money.’

‘And what will you do with your savings?’ further inquired the gentleman.

Joseph looked up in amazement and said, ‘What could I do with them else than send them to my parents?’

This pleased the gentleman very much, and he asked his children if they would like to keep the young Savoyard with them as a servant.

‘Oh, yes!’ they all cried with one voice; ‘let him remain here.’

Thus was poor Joseph really helped. At once he received a page’s livery, and remained in the house, where he earned good wages, and could see his dear marmot every day.

After a year had passed he asked for leave to go and visit his parents, which was willingly granted him. Quite like a great gentleman did he appear in his little native village, when all gazed upon him as if he were one of the wonders of the world. But his parents had, through his savings, become quite well-to-do people.

After this wonderful success many Savoyard boys wandered to Paris to try their fortune with marmots, but all did not succeed so well as Joseph, because few had so good a heart or such true love for those at home as he had.

J. F. C.

THE LINNET AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A LINNET once so sweetly sang,
That everywhere his praises rang,
Till, thinking none might him excel,
He made a match with Philomel.*
On each side through a friendly bird
Upon the matter they conferred;
And having settled time and terms
(The wager being fifty worms),
They chose a fitting place for sound,
And called the feathered race around
Who, perching near on branch and spray,
Elected umpires for the day;
And these were birds of no mean mark—
The Blackbird, Robin, Thrush, and Lark.

A herald gave the signal now,
And all was still on every bough:
Then, summoned to display his skill,
The challenger began to trill,
Before the hushed, attentive throng,
A sweetly modulated song,
With notes so varied, soft, and clear,
They brought delight to every ear;
And when at whiles he made a pause,
The wood was ringing with applause.
He ceased, and silence by degrees
Returned among the peopled trees.

Then Philomel was bid to start,
And soon enchanted many a heart,
Three pure accords of sweetest tone,
With perfect cadence all his own,
Began the lay, which swelled ere long
Into a rich and gushing song,
With falls and rises not a few,
That blent in music rich and true.
With native ease, the supple throat
Instinctive passed from note to note,
While all the birds in silence listened,
Though many an eye with pleasure glistened,

But still a warm debate arose
Among the umpires at the close.
The Lark and Robin did not choose
To see their friend the Linnet lose,
And thought it fairest to declare
The merit equal in the pair:
The Thrush and Blackbird still averred;
Till, as they argued o’er the matter,
The crowd joined in with chirp and chatter.
Of course few birds of taste could fail
To take part with the Nightingale;
But love of opposition drew
Adverse opinions from a few.
‘I,’ cried a Jackdaw, ‘like the Jay,
Believe the Linnet won the day.’
The judges heard, and in a minute
Decided each against the Linnet.

Thus fools will surely mar your fame
More by approval than by blame.

W. R. E.

* The Nightingale.



Nightingale and Linnet. By HARRISON WEIR.

Chatterbox.



The Children at the Window.

MARCIA'S HOME.

CHAPTER I.



OB, do take your head out of the way; I can't see a bit.'

'Greta, don't lean so heavily on me, you'll have me through the window in a minute.'

'Let me up, sissy! Let me up, Bob!'

'Oh! bother, here are Prince and Prue squeezing in too, we really can't do with them, they ought to be

in the nursery. Rachel! what did you bring them down for?'

A prim nurse answered the clatter of young voices.

'My mistress promised Master Prinsep and Miss Prudence that they should come into the dining-room at four o'clock to watch for their cousin.'

'Can't they look out of the nursery window?' asked Greta, not yielding place to the little struggling creatures below her.

'We can't see nuffin there but chimneys,' said little Prue piteously; she was the younger of the twins, but generally spoke for the pair.

'Come to the other window, dears,' said their nurse; 'there's only Master Cyril there, and you can both stand on the same chair.'

'Oh! I say,' protested a voice from behind the curtain, 'that won't do, they mustn't come here; I'm tracing a design for my album at this window, and the children fidget so.'

'Oh! Cyril, how ill-natured!' loudly proclaimed Greta, quick to detect selfishness in others, though lenient to herself. 'Never mind him, Rachel; squeeze them in, somehow.'

After a good deal of grumbling and complaining, the little ones were at last raised to a position whence they could command the whole length of the dull London street in which they lived, and to the disgust of their elders they would cry, 'Here it is!' to every baker's cart which rattled by.

Of course, Greta, Bob, and Cyril, knew it could not be the right sound for the cab, but still it excited them enough to make them crane their necks uncomfortably, and awoke a feeling of indignation at the disappointment which followed.

At last the lamps were lighted. The early November twilight fell, and Cyril and his drawing had to leave the window.

'The train must be late,' said Bob.

'Or perhaps they have missed it,' said Cyril.

'Mother never misses a train,' declared Greta; 'but my eyes ache with staring, I shall get down;' and she came forwards into the room, a well-grown, open-faced girl of ten.

Bob, a year older, and Cyril, older still, bore a family likeness to her, but were widely different in appearance; Cyril was a slight, delicate bookworm, naturalist, and general student, while Bob was simply a rollicking schoolboy. There was an elder brother still at Winchester, and these four with the twins of three years old made up the family of Mr. Tredthorpe, banker, of Silverpin Street, City.

Quite enough children one would think for the

somewhat straitened quarters in Mornington Terrace, and yet there was another expected, a little cousin from India, just Greta's age, sent home on account of failing health after an unsuccessful attempt to keep her by her parents. Mrs. Tredthorpe had been telegraphed for yesterday, and had gone down to Southampton to meet the vessel and her little niece, and now they were expected any minute.

'I daresay they won't come at all to-day,' said Cyril, who had a perverse pleasure in saying what he knew would vex Greta.

'What nonsense!' declared Greta, instantly 'fetched,' as Bob called it, 'trains are often late.'

'Well, it doesn't much matter,' said Bob, 'it's only another girl, now if it had been cousin Dick, we could have had larks.'

'I'm sure we don't want any more boys in this house,' protested Greta; 'they are tiresome enough, I am looking forward to a companion of my own.'

'To sit prettily with, and stitch, and do fancywork,' mimicked Bob.

Greta reddened a little. She had a good deal of the Tomboy in her composition, and it was her mother's and governess's great complaint that she would take to no quiet, girlish occupations, but must needs work and play like a boy.

Not quite Greta's own fault, since boys had been her sole companions from infancy, but still the 'chaff' made her blush.

Greta was never happy away from her brothers, but when together they were constantly bickering; with a real love for each other, there was a little law of bearing and forbearing forgotten amongst them, which caused constant confusion and uproar in the schoolroom, and prevented Mrs. Tredthorpe, a partial invalid, from seeking much of the society of her elder children. She left them to a governess and their day-schools, and thought she did all she could when she taught the twins their letters, saw to the clothing of the six, and mildly amused her husband of an evening till he fell asleep in the chair.

She was a gentle, easy person, not soon excited, though just now she felt some pleasure at the idea of seeing Lily's child. Lily being her youngest sister, married twelve years ago to a Civil servant in India, and for that long time separated from all her relatives. All the children liked the fun and stir of a new inmate, and Bob and Greta had made rough preparation for her by clearing a shelf in the schoolroom for her sole use. Cyril had been asked to give up a certain drawer in addition, but he had declared his 'specimens' would suffer if he did.

Greta was just thinking of taking a last look at this newly cleared ground, when the twins who were still at the darkening window, called out for the fiftieth time, 'Here it is!'

'Wolf!' said Cyril, alluding to the well-known fable of the shepherd-boy.

But the rattle of the London cab made itself heard in the distance, and Bob proclaimed that there was luggage on the top, so Greta flew to the front door in defiance of sundry laws against that proceeding, whilst Bob cried 'Hurrah!' and the twins beat their fat fists on the window delighted to see mother's bonnet in the cab. It stopped at the door;—out came mother, some cloaks, a hamper, a basket,

an odd book or two, and finally something in a scarlet cloak and hood. Something that staggered a little on the pavement, and looked helplessly round, till Susan the maid in sheer pity lifted it up, saying, 'Poor little soul, it's dead tired!' and carried it into the hall, where Rachel and her twins gathered round it, and bore it off to the schoolroom fire.

Greta stood by amazed and passive. Could that little creature, a head shorter than herself, be cousin Marcia of her own age, who was to be her friend and companion, and assist her to repel the encroachments and defy the power of 'the boys'? Why, she would be no use at all; she had better never have come. Rachel and the twins might have her; she looked more their age, as the nurse took off her wraps and revealed the tiny, slight figure, the close-cropped fair head, and the dark eyes with darker lashes, which seemed too weary to be lifted. Greta was too much disappointed to keep her trouble to herself, she whispered in Bob's ear,—

'She can't be ten, she's nothing but a baby,' and then flew to carry the news to Cyril. 'I thought she would be merry and tall, and able to hold her own, and prevent people bothering,' she added.

'People meaning Bob and me,' said Cyril. 'Well, Greta, I admit you are sold; the child's name alone is a do. Marcia, indeed! there isn't much martial about that little slip, but she looks intelligent.'

'Intelligent!' said Greta, tossing her head; 'she may amuse the twins, but she can make no difference to me; I wanted some one to be a change in the house, and—and—do us all good.'

'Well, give a chance,' said Cyril, with unusual good-nature; 'Bob seems to be taken with her.'

Yes, indeed, rough Bob was standing by the schoolroom fire, stooping down over the little cousin, and actually warming the small cold hands in his own. There was something in the appealing eyes of the new-comer that touched him, as if a lost lamb had wanted shelter and affection from him.

'Bob likes new people, whatever they are,' said Greta, and went upstairs after her mother, without saying one word of greeting to her cousin. She would not believe that Marcia was ten years old, and had feelings like herself, and was this very moment wondering why strong, tall, rosy-faced cousin Margaret never bade her welcome to England.

England seemed cold, and chill, and dreary, with November fogs, and needed kind faces, and cheery words, and loving looks, to make it tolerable to the little exile. Aunt Margaret had been kind and gentle, and had said that she was like her mother on first meeting, and then had dozed in the railway-carriage all through most of the winter day, leaving Marcia to wonder what cousin Greta would be like,—Greta, who was just her age, and who must be her friend and comforter till the happy day came when she might go home. India was home to little Marcia Vere, and already her heart felt desolate at the long years which must pass—five or six at the very least,—before she might hope to return there.

The tears started into her eyes at the thought as Bob warmed her hands, but she pressed them back—this kind, big boy should not see her cry; and, besides, had not her mother said, 'I know my little

Marcia will be brave, and not fret, but remember she has a Father who will always be with her, and another Home for which to fit herself besides the dear Indian home; and this will keep her busy and happy while she is away from me?'

And Marcia whispered to herself, 'I will be brave and patient. I know He will let me go home at last;' and 'He' did not mean her busy father in India. And then the hot fire made her dizzy, and everything grew dim and misty, and an alarmed voice said through the mist, 'I say, Rachel! Cyril! look out, the little thing's slipping,—mind the fender!'

And the twins screamed and clung to Rachel, and Bob turned as white as his little cousin, and could do nothing, and Susan ran in from the hall, and everything was confusion.

Greta was in her mother's room when all this happened, but she felt a little remorseful afterwards when she heard that her cousin was put to bed ill and worn-out.

'Don't you go for to worry and talk to her now,' said Susan, who had taken the command of affairs; 'she's just dead tired, and a bit sore-hearted as well, at the newness of things, I can see, poor lamb!'

(To be continued.)

CARRYING A LADDER.

DID you ever see a person carry a ladder? He puts it on his shoulder, or it maybe he puts his head between the rounds, and has one of the sides resting on each shoulder, and having it nicely balanced walks along. A man with a ladder is an interesting object in a crowded street. He looks at the end in front, but the end behind him he cannot see. If he moves the front end to the right to get out of the way of a person, away goes the rear end just as far in the opposite direction, and the slightest turn of his body, only a few inches, will give the ends a sweep of several feet, and those in the way may look out for bruised hats and bumped heads, while the window-glass along the street is in constant danger from the unseen rear end of the ladder. When a small boy, I was carrying a not very large ladder, when there was a crash. An unlucky movement had brought the rear end of my ladder against a window. Instead of scolding me, my father made me stop, and said very quietly: 'Look here, my son, there is one thing I wish you always to remember; that is, every ladder has two ends.' I never have forgotten that, though many, many years have gone. Don't we carry things besides ladders that have two ends? When I see a young man getting 'fast' habits, I think he sees only one end of that ladder, the one pointed towards pleasure, and that he does not know that the other end is wounding his parents' hearts. Many a young girl carries a ladder in the shape of a love for dress and finery; she only sees the gratification of a foolish pride at the forward end of the ladder, while the end that she does not see is crushing modesty and friendship as she goes along thoughtlessly among the crowd. Ah! yes, every ladder has two ends, and it is a thing to be remembered in more ways than one.—*American Agriculturist.*



Summer. By W. H. Boor.

SONG FOR SUMMER.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX'.

Allegretto.



The rose and li - ly are in bloom, The lit - tle bu - sy



bee . . Her sum - mer du - ties doth re - sume With cheer - ful in - dus - try. . .



From flow'r to flow'r the whole day long, She toils with fru - gal skill; . . At



ear - ly dawn, in mer - ry song, She works with right good will . .



Copyright.

THE rose and lily are in bloom,
The little busy bee
Her summer duties doth resume
With cheerful industry.
From flower to flower the whole day long
She toils with frugal skill;
At early dawn, in merry song,
She works with right good will.

Thus earnestly she labours hard
To multiply her store,
Each evening brings the day's reward,
Of increase to her door.
Hark! hark! the sound, the welcome hum,
So sweet to every ear!
It tells us that the summer's come,
The old and young to cheer.

She never idles, never tires,
 From morning until eve;
 The lesson that her zeal inspires
 We will learn to achieve.
 Let us then, like the busy bee,
 Our days not spend in vain;
 Resembling her in industry,
 How great will be our gain!

A SAILOR'S FAMILY.

(Concluded from page 227.)



H! you were very wrong indeed, friend,' said Theresa Spas, 'to suspect your honest wife. She is a model of virtue and honour, and there is no mother on earth who brings up her children better, poor as she is, and often nearly starving with hunger. You should see, man, what she has done for your children. Yesterday young John wanted to go to sea, out of love to her,

in order to earn money to pay the rent.'

'To pay the rent? She is poor!' he cried. 'Ah! ah! I am not rich. We must work, indeed. No, I have enough money for that; and my good Anne-Mie shall have her little shop. Where is my wife? I wish to see her myself.'

'She has gone out to sell mussels, and Micken and Roseken with her.'

'In what direction? tell me, I pray you. I must run after her, for I am in a fever of impatience.'

'Yes, friend, I can tell you; I know pretty well through which streets she goes, but it is better you should stay here; you are too excited, and would probably miss her. Let me go and look for her. I will acquaint her with your happy return, and will hasten, also, to the shop where your son works as a sail-maker.'

'No, I am too impatient; I must go myself.'

'Come, man, be reasonable,' said Theresa, very seriously. 'If you discover yourself too suddenly to your wife, she will certainly be overcome by her too great joy, and fall down fainting in the street. She thinks you are dead, poor thing! I must prepare her quietly and gradually for such a surprise. That is best, is it not?'

'You are right; you are as good as an angel,' replied the sailor. 'Go, run quickly; I shall count the minutes.'

Theresa left the room in all haste.

For some time John Boots remained with his eyes raised to Heaven, full of the wonderful happiness which God had now, after so many sufferings, allowed him to enjoy; then, as he gazed round and round the room, he saw in a corner Roseken's shapeless doll. He took it in his hand, muttering,—

'Poor children, this is what they played with! They sometimes suffered hunger! And I who, after eight years' absence, have come back from a far-away land, have brought them no other present than a parrot! Now there is time still; in a few minutes I shall be back again.'

As he said these last words he put the bird down in the alcove behind the curtains, and ran out of the house.

He had scarcely got into the street before Anne-Mie came into the room with a wheelbarrow. Tottering on her legs, she pushed the wheelbarrow into a corner, and then sat down at the table quite exhausted. At first she took no heed of the words of her two little girls, who tried with their caresses to comfort her.

Anne-Mie shook her head with an expression of hopelessness, but after a few minutes' silence she said, sadly,—

'Alas! dear children, we are indeed very unfortunate! During this whole morning I have gone through street after street with my wheelbarrow. It is nearly noon, and I have not sold half my mussels. I can walk no more. Alas! they will be spoilt, and instead of earning anything—. No, children, let me rest a little; you are good, but I must be quiet now.'

The little girls moved aside the bench on which they were sitting in respect to their mother's sadness. She sat with her head resting on her hand, sunk in painful thought.

'Good morning, Anneken dear!' cried the parrot behind the curtain of the alcove.

'Again that voice in my heart!' sighed Anne-Mie, with a bitter smile on her lips. 'How painfully does my distressed brain deceive me!'

'Mother, there is some one calling you,' said Micken.

'Yes; outside the door, I think,' added Roseken.

'What? How? You heard it, too?' cried the widow, greatly excited. 'Children, children, it is not possible! The voice! It is the voice of your father. At the door, did you say?'

And, followed by her children, she was about to look outside; but before she reached the door she again heard the voice behind her back,—

'Good morning, Anneken dear!'

She turned round and stared in amazement on all sides, till the words 'Here is John!' sounded in her ears.

'Mother! mother! there, in the alcove!' whispered the children, trembling with terror at this mystery.

'Are we all mad?' cried Anne-Mie, wringing her hands.

She took several steps in the direction of the alcove, then she hesitated, and remained standing. She was pale, and trembled. Summoning up all her courage she sprang forward, pushed aside the curtains.

'A parrot!' she exclaimed, as she brought the cage to the table. 'What does this mean?'

'Oh, what a beautiful bird, mother!' cried Micken.

'See! see! look how he is spreading his feathers,' exclaimed Roseken. 'Oh, that is beautiful!'

'Good morning, Anneken dear!' cried the parrot in a man's gruff voice, which thrilled through the widow's heart, for she fell down on a chair, and remained without speaking, staring on the ground with wide-open eyes, as if trying to fathom the mystery which filled her by turns with hope and fear.

Then again the gruff 'Good morning, Anneken dear!' sounded in her ears; but this time it was not the parrot which had spoken it.

She stood up and looked towards the door. A man, who in all haste put a basket on to the ground, sprang into the room and joyously ran up to the woman with open arms. With a cry of joy she fell upon his neck. She had scarcely strength to murmur, 'John! John! Oh, how good and merciful God is!' and fainted away, with her head resting on his breast. He carried her to a chair and pressed her hands, calling her by name, and as he kissed her she opened her eyes.

Then John Boots sprang to his children, took them both into his arms, and kissed their blooming cheeks. What words they then said to each other, amid their smiles and tears, it would be impossible to repeat, till at last John Boots, on a sign from his wife, replied cheerfully,—

'Yes, my Anneken dear, I know everything. You are a brave woman, a good mother, and you have brought up my children in honour and virtue. You are poor—you have suffered; but now you must be happy: your sorrow is over. I have some money, 120*l.* sterling; that is, indeed, 3000 francs. You shall have your shop; as mistress of it, you shall stand behind the counter. I will work; we shall have a pleasant life; our children shall go to school; and we shall never know the end of our happiness.'

The only answer which Anne-Mie could give to this brilliant prospect was a fresh embrace, while tears of joy fell from her eyes.

He released himself from her arms and said, 'I had quite forgotten that I had brought something for you.'

He took up the basket and gave to each of his children a doll with curly hair and splendid clothes. Mieken and Roseken stood perfectly amazed at their magnificent presents, which they gazed at speechless and with open mouths, as if they could not believe their eyes.

Meanwhile John Boots was busy hanging a gold chain, with a locket at the end of it, round his wife's neck, and he sealed this token of his love with a kiss.

'That is not all,' he cried, turning again to the basket; 'we must have a feast to-day,—cakes, ham, smoked tongue, and sweetmeats, and lastly—But no one must begin till our John comes home.'

'Here is John! here is John! Hurrah!' said the boy, whose head had appeared at the door. 'Father! father! who would ever thought of such a thing?'

And with one jump he hung upon his father's neck, who pressed him in his arms and exclaimed with tears, 'John, John, my boy! really, I begin to think that a man may die of joy. Strong as I am, I feel ready to faint. Yes, yes, dear boy, I know very well that you are glad to see me. But come, now, let us sit down to the table. What a great strong boy you have grown! And that good, honest woman,—that angel who poured such sweet balm into my bosom, shall be happy with us, too. Oh! how can I reward her for her kindness?'

'You can indeed, John,' remarked Anne-Mie. 'Theresa Spas has loved and helped me like a sister while I was poor. Now that a better life dawns upon us, let her remain my sister; let her live with us in our new house.'

The sailor seized the hand of the old woman, who had come in with the boy.

'Will you live with us, be our companion, you good Theresa?' he asked her.

'I do not deserve so much happiness,' murmured the old woman.

'Well! it shall be so then,' cried John Boots, with joy. 'Now sit down to the table; you won't leave us any more. There are cakes, ham, and tongue; each can have according to his taste.'

'Mother! mother!' cried the boy, 'are we going to eat now without praying? On the day that God — Well?—'

'John, my boy, that is right of you,' said the sailor, deeply touched. 'Yes, yes, let us thank the Lord Almighty, who has protected you and me.'

The others had already clasped their hands and bent their heads.

When the short but earnest prayer was over they began to enjoy all the dainties. The parrot, who also hoped to get his share, kept crying out, 'Good morning, Anneken dear! Here is John!'

Mieken and Roseken gave the bird so much that their father was obliged to put it back again in the alcove, lest they should overfeed his travelling companion and cause its death. When he had returned to the table again the boy asked him,—

'But, father dear, how comes it that you stayed away eight years without letting us hear anything of you? You must surely have had terrible adventures at sea?'

'Not many adventures, my boy,' replied John Boots. 'But one is enough to plunge a man into misery. We were sailing in our ship to Hong-Kong. On the voyage back a terrible storm overtook us, which cast us on the coast of Borneo, where our ship was dashed to pieces among the rocks. I know nothing of my comrades: they were probably drowned. I swam to land, and after many long wanderings fell into the hands of the natives, who bound me, carried me with them over mountains and valleys, and at last sold me for a slave to a king in the interior. There I was not at all badly treated; but I was narrowly watched, and I could not think of escaping and returning hundreds and hundreds of miles through that terrible wilderness.'

'It is now nearly a year ago that my king was engaged in a war against another king of that country. I taught the men there, as well as I could, how to carry on the war. I made them weapons, and did so much for them that my king completely overcame his enemies. He out of gratitude allowed me to return home again. He gave me guides to accompany me to the sea-coast, and gave me a box of small diamonds, which I sold in London for 120*l.* sterling. But to-morrow or the day after I will tell you more about it, children, so that you shall know it quite as well as I do myself. Come here together to me once more. I remember how I sat in this same place the evening before my departure, and so will I sit again now. Here Mieken and Roseken, each upon one knee, riding on horseback, my Anneken dear on my right arm, and my brave John on my left. See, see, that is happiness indeed! Now as before the horses will jump, and merry songs shall be sung.'

Then with joy he began to sing a well-known sailor's song, and they all joined in the chorus, and so we leave them to their new and happy life.



The Father's return Home

Chatterbox.



The Morning Walk. From the Wurtemberg collection at the Crystal Palace.

FALSE PRETENCES.

I TRAVELLED on the Western line
Beside a well-gloved exquisite;
His coat was glossier far than mine,
His hair was curled, his linen white.
Clad in such goodly cloth of Leeds,
With hat superb and jetty boots,
Could such a man do naughty deeds—
Pick fobs, or forge a cheque on Coutts?
He thanked me much—my pardon sought—
Anticipated every wish—
Times, sir? or *Punch*? I surely thought
He was at least a Cavendish!
He left me with a finished grace—
It was not far, I think, from Kew;
But when he went (the traitor base!),
My watch was gone, and money, too.
He robbed me of a ten-pound note,
And many a month I felt the shock,
I had to wear a shabby coat,
And ask my neighbours, 'What's o'clock?'
That was, you see, a beast of prey,
A wolf who wore a fleece of snow;
And thus do villains, every day,
Like men of worth and goodness go.
Ay, you may meet in human shape
The wallowing sow, the wily fox,
The surly bear, the cat, the ape;
Mind that, my darling Chatterbox.
Sloth, gluttony, deceit, and pride,
Dark passions which no art can tame,
In robes of silk and broadcloth hide,
And urge us on to deeds of shame.
Speak no fair words, nor falsely smile,
In malice or in unconcern;
Be what you seem—untruth is vile—
And lying lips must turn or burn. G. S. O.

THE THREE ROGUES.

(Translated from the Italian of Gozzi's *Oriental Tales*.)

A PEASANT was taking a goat to Bagdad. He was mounted on a donkey, and the goat, with a bell tied round its neck, was following him. Three rogues saw this little company go past, and desired to enrich themselves.

Said the one, 'May I carry off that fellow's goat in such a way that he shall never be able to ask it again of me!'

And the other cried, 'Grant me the wit to rob him of the ass on which he is mounted.'

'Oh, truly, what an exploit!' exclaimed the third. 'What would you say if I meant so to despoil him of his clothes, that he will actually be obliged to me?'

The first rascal, following the traveller softly, by stealth took the bell from the goat's neck, fastened it to the ass's tail, and made off with his booty.

The man, still riding the ass, heard the sound of the bell constantly behind him, and never for one instant imagined that the goat was no longer there, till by-and-by he happened to turn round. Picture to yourself his astonishment when he could not see

the animal that he had been taking to market to sell! Of every one who passed he asked news of his goat; presently the second rogue met him, who answered,—
'At the corner of yonder lane I saw a man running off, dragging a goat along with him.'

The countryman jumped from his ass, saying,—

'Please take charge of my donkey,' and ran after the thief in the direction he supposed him to have taken.

When he had been running hither and thither for some time, he came back to find that neither ass nor keeper were to be seen. Our two rascals had already got far away, both well content with their booty; the third now awaited the simple man leaning against a well by which the latter must pass. Then, with loud wails, he began to lament so bitterly, that the loser of the ass and goat was led to accost a person who seemed thus afflicted. Approaching him he said,—

'What are you grieving about? I am sure you cannot have had as much ill-luck as I have had: I have lost two animals, the price of which would have made my fortune.'

'Oh, but think what a loss mine is!' exclaimed the thief. 'Have you, like me, ever let a casket full of diamonds fall into a well when you were told to carry them to the judge? I shall perhaps be hanged for theft.'

'But why do you not go down into the well?' asked the countryman; 'it is not very deep.'

'Alas! I am not clever enough,' answered the rogue. 'I would rather run the risk of being hanged than drown myself, which I should certainly do; but if there were any one willing to do me this service, I would gladly give him ten pieces of gold.'

'Promise me those ten pieces of gold,' cried the poor dupe, thinking the sum would more than repay him for the loss of his animals, 'and I will get you your casket back.'

No sooner said than done; he threw off his clothes with such rapidity, and descended into the well so quickly, that the robber saw at once that he would scarcely have time to possess himself of his spoil. The countryman having reached the bottom of the well without finding any casket there, came up again, and was speedily aware of his new misfortune. Thus clothes, ass, and goat, had all gone different ways; and their unlucky owner, with all his toil, could scarcely find people charitable enough to be willing to clothe him.

CARLO VIII.

BIRDS OF PREY ON THE
HIGH MOUNTAINS.

HO has not often heard of the robberies of the eagle, and the murderous deeds of the vulture, upon man and beast? Eagles and vultures are, in fact, the great bandits who reign with almost unlimited sway in the lofty mountain regions over all other animals, making themselves dangerous even to the largest beasts, often not fearing even men, and not afraid sometimes to face the bold huntsman armed with his gun. The vulture has a much worse repute

than the eagle, so that all the evil deeds attributed by the people to birds of prey among the mountains are laid to his charge. It is scarcely necessary to impute the crimes of others to him, for he has quite enough of his own to prove that he well deserves his bad character. The vulture (*lammergeier*, as he is called in Switzerland, or sometimes *bartgeier*, from the long beard which he wears) is a very formidable robber. His height is from four to five feet, and his width, from the tip of one outstretched wing to the other, measures from eight to ten feet; his strong, sharp beak alone is often five inches long. When one thinks, too, of his sharp, lead-coloured claws, and his fiery, blood-red eyes, one can understand what a terrible enemy a vulture is to contend with. In the morning, after sunrise, the vulture starts on his expeditions, and flies high above the mountain-peaks, while his eye eagerly searches for his prey. If he sees a victim, he approaches it in wide circles, flaps his wings together, and then darts down quick as lightning. Very rarely is an escape possible. Small animals, like foxes, hares, weasels, marmots, badgers, dogs, kids, and lambs, does this robber carry off with him at once into the air, and consumes them close to his inaccessible nest, or on some peak of rock.

If the vulture sees larger prey, like chamois, goats, or sheep, which he cannot so easily vanquish or carry away, on dangerous places, as the edge of a precipice, his mode of attack is quite a peculiar one. He approaches the animal and tries to frighten it by flapping his wings and striking them against it; thus he stuns or exhausts his victim till it falls over into the abyss. There are instances on record in which birds of prey have employed this manner of attack against hunters, who have had to exert all their coolness, skill, and presence of mind, in order not to succumb in the struggle.

If the vulture succeeds in capturing a larger animal in this way, he pecks out his eyes, tears open his body, eats the flesh, and, lastly, even the bones; for his powers of digestion are so strong and quick, that he can devour not only the bones, but even the claws of animals. It seems almost incredible, but we know for a fact, that bones of oxen from six to nine inches long, as well as the ribs of foxes and chamois, have been found in the stomachs of slain vultures.

But it may well be asked, What instances are there of the vulture attacking man? These are many and frequent. On the Silbernalp, not far from Einsiedeln, a vulture attacked a little goatherd boy, tore his flesh, and pushed him down into an abyss just as the shepherds were hastening to his help. A wooden cross marks the spot of this disaster. At Mürren, in the valley of Lauterbrunnen, people point out to this day a steep crag of rock, to the top of which a vulture once bore away and devoured a child which he had stolen from Mürren. For a long time after the child's frock was seen hanging on an inaccessible ridge.

Who has not already heard the story of Vulture-Anni, as she was called? It was in the Bernese Oberland, in summer, when the couple Zurbuchen, man and wife, went up into the mountains to gather hay, and took their little child Anna with them. The child, who was scarcely three years old, soon fell asleep; the father put a straw hat over her face

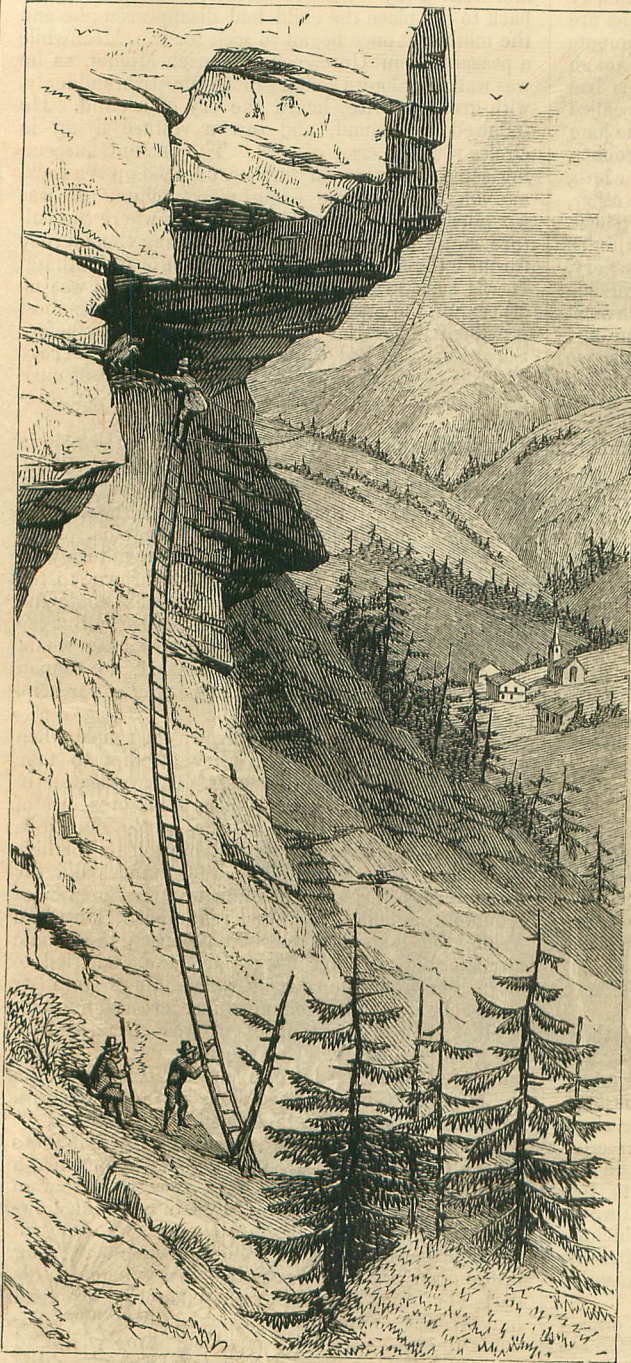
and went away with her mother. When he came back to the place the child had disappeared; he and the mother at once began to seek for it. Meanwhile a peasant from Unterseen, Heinrich Michel, as he was walking along a solitary mountain-path, suddenly, with great surprise, heard the cry of a child. He followed the sound, and saw a vulture flying in circles round a crag of rock. The peasant, suspecting some evil, went on further, climbed up the rock, and on the extreme edge found a child. It was wounded in the arm and in the hand, where the vulture must have seized it; and during the journey through the air it had lost a portion of its clothing. It was soon after discovered that this child was no other than the missing Anna Zurbuchen: it was most providential that the man should be going by before the vulture had had time to settle down on the rock with his prey. The child became an object of curiosity, and afterwards went by the name of 'Vulture-Anni.'

A similar circumstance happened quite recently in the Bernese Oberland. On the 2nd of June, 1870, Johann Betschen, a sturdy young boy of Kien, in the Reichenbach valley, was going up to Avis, which lies much higher up among the mountains. At a lonely spot the boy was attacked by a vulture with violent blows from its wings, and thrown to the ground. He tried, by lying on his back, to defend himself with his stick and with his feet. But the bird fell upon him with such fury that he would scarcely have been able to save himself, if a woman armed with an iron hook, hearing his cries for help, had not come to his aid.

The vulture only attacks grown-up people when he is irritated, especially if they attempt to take the young birds out of her nest. A woodcutter in Glarus, who had taken two young vultures out of a nest, was followed for four hours by the old birds, and the man could only defend himself by the help of his axe. Under similar circumstances did the male bird attack the chamois-hunter Scherer of Ammon: a bullet, however, rendered it harmless. When the huntsman reached the nest, the female attacked him with her beak and claws, and tried to drive him from the rock by violent blows from her wings. To defend himself on so insecure a stand-point against such a strong opponent was attended with the greatest danger. But the undaunted huntsman succeeded in placing his gun on the rock opposite to the bird, and then managed to cock it and fire it with his naked toes: the bird fell dead into the abyss.

In most cases it is quite impossible to climb up to the vulture's nest, or even to reach it near enough for a man to be let down by a rope to it from an overhanging rock: three brothers in Sardinia, however, tried this. When the youngest, who had had the rope bound round his loins and shoulders, hung in the open air over a terrible abyss, the old birds darted out upon him. The poor fellow tried to defend himself with a sword, and struck out bravely. Suddenly the rope gave way somewhat; he looked up and remarked with horror that he had nearly severed the rope in two. But cautiously and slowly was he drawn up and saved, but terror had turned the lad's black hair to white.

Deeds similar to those just described are attributed



to the eagle, who from his strength and courage has been called 'the king of birds,' and is much more frequently seen than the vulture. As formerly all depredations and crimes were imputed to the vulture, now they are laid to the eagle's

charge. When his eye has observed a victim he is even bolder than the vulture. Men, too, has he often attacked. In Grisons, an eagle seized a child and carried it away in his claws. Attracted by the cry of the child, the father followed the robber, and could only with difficulty rescue it; but its eyes were hacked out, and its arm torn so that it soon after died. The bird, which was afterwards slain by the father, was stuffed, and is now in a museum at Winterthur. A German naturalist relates a very exciting story of an eagle who attacked a grown-up man:—'I received an eagle,' he relates, 'whose capture was attended with the following strange circumstances. The bold and hungry bird darted down into the midst of a village upon a large pig, whose shrieks soon brought out all the villagers. A peasant, hastening up, chased the eagle, who was very unwilling to let go his prey, but rising at last from the back of the fat pig he darted at once upon a cat, with which he flew off and settled down upon a hedge. The wounded pig and the bleeding cat raised a heart-rending duet. The peasant now wished to save the cat, and fetched a weapon. But when the eagle beheld again the disturber of his meal he let the cat drop, attacked the peasant, and fixed his claws into him, so that now all three were screaming—the peasant, the fat pig, and the old cat. Other peasants hastened up, captured the eagle, and brought him bound to one of my friends.'

J. F. C.

THE WHITE LILY.

LITTLE white Lily
Sat by a stone,
Drooping and waiting
Till the sun shone.

Little white Lily
Sunshine has fed;
Little white Lily
Is lifting her head.

Little white Lily
Said 'It is good:
Little white Lily's
Clothing and food.'
Little white Lily
Drest like a bride,
Shining with whiteness
And crowned beside.

Little white Lily
Droopeth with pain,
Watching and waiting
For the wet rain.
Little white Lily
Holdeth her cup,
Rain is fast falling
And filling it up.



The White Lily.

Little white Lily
Saith, 'Good again,
When I am thirsty
To have nice rain;
Now I am stronger,
Now I am cool,
Heat cannot burn me
My veins are so full.'

Little white Lily
Smells very sweet;
On her head sunshine,
Rain at her feet.
'Thanks to the sunshine,
Thanks to the rain,
Little white Lily
Is happy again.'

DR. G. MACDONALD.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 235.)

CHAPTER II.



MARCIA spent her first week in London in bed. She was not very ill, but she was weary and worn out with sea-sickness, and a little heart-sickness as well. The rough boys, and Greta, too, were sorry for her, and brought her picture-books and toys to amuse her; but Greta was more than ever convinced that the twins were more suitable companions for her cousin than herself.

Those little mortals had constantly to be caught and carried out of the invalid's room, or dragged like caterpillars off her bed. There was a great attraction to them in the small pale face and cropped head, or else it was the low, clear voice which pleased them, as Marcia read aloud one of their nursery-books or told them some story about her own home. Prince and Prue lamented with loud lamentations the day they found their cousin's bedroom door open and the bird flown; unless by special permission they might not follow her downstairs, and the loss to them of such superior society on their landing was very great.

Meantime, Marcia sat in the large chair by the schoolroom fire, still weak, and a little frightened of her new cousins, while Cyril was making an inventory of some coins, Bob was cutting a stick for tip-cat, and Greta was marching restlessly up and down the room like a caged leopard.

It was holiday afternoon, and it rained. A bad afternoon for making the acquaintance of the young Tredthorpes.

'Greta, how you shake! Can't you sit down?' said Cyril, fretfully.

'I have been sitting all day,' Greta answered, stopping only for an instant.

'That shuffling is worse still,' continued Cyril, as Greta executed some manœuvre to fix her shoe more firmly on her foot; 'this table is horrid.'

'And my sandal is half off,' said Greta, 'I must shuffle till it is mended.'

'Then mend it,' said Cyril.

'It is too much trouble,' replied Greta.

'I'll do it for you,' said a small voice from the armchair.

The three looked up surprised; Marcia's face had lost its weary look, as she took a little basket from beside her, and chose out needle and thread.

Greta wanted to refuse the offered assistance, but Marcia seemed to take it for granted that she might render this little service, and it was impossible to say her nay. So she mended the shoe, and a bit of braid on Greta's dress, and then paused just as Cyril groaned,—

'Oh, dear! this table, it is the ruin of everything, with its short leg!'

'Put a bit of wood under it,' suggested Marcia: 'You do it,' she said, looking full at Bob, who stopped his chopping to listen to her.

And Bob, who was of a carpentering turn, designed a wedge after his cousin's directions, greatly to the benefit of Cyril's writing.

Marcia was clearly a small woman of some observation and quickness, and Greta instantly placed her a little higher than the twins in her estimation. But she was not pleased when Bob observed that Marcia had a good notion of handling a knife, and Cyril openly thanked her for the service she had rendered her:—Cyril, who never was civil to any girls! But, then, Marcia was hardly a girl; more like a sick baby, and as such the boys were treating her. This idea dispelled any little jealousy that was creeping into Greta's mind; or, at any rate, made her ashamed of it, and she sat down by her cousin, resolved to amuse herself by questioning her this wet afternoon.

'Lessons for you, too, on Monday, Marcia,' she began. 'How shall you like that?'

'Very much,' said the little girl, brightening; here was Greta at last taking an interest in her.

'Monday, English history, sums, French exercises, and Latin,' continued Greta, 'but I suppose you won't go in for that. I do, and the boys, of course. By the way, Miss Milward has the boys, as well as us, till Christmas; they have scarlet fever at their school, so it is broken up. But seriously, Marcia, I wonder who you will work with. I am in French with Cyril, and in sums with Bob; my Latin, of course, I do alone; I am not up to them yet.'

'Then couldn't I do Latin with you, Greta?' asked Marcia, simply.

Greta paused, then stammered, 'Oh! of course, —' and then stopped.

'I always kept up with brother Dick,' continued Marcia; 'I would try not to hinder you.'

Now, cousin Dick was a year older than Marcia. Cyril looked up provokingly at his sister, as much as to say, that she was jumping too fast to conclusions as to Marcia's supposed ignorance, while Bob, the unrestrained, exclaimed,—

'I say, Marcia, you'll be beating all of us before long.'

But Marcia flushed up and said, 'Oh, no!' and then Greta opened another battery of questions as to Marcia's knowledge of French, history, and so on.

'Why, I believe you like learning,' said Greta, in

a disappointed tone. 'I do my lessons because I must, and because I get bad marks, and am kept in if I don't; but I always think them a bore, and am glad when they are over.'

'I don't always like my lessons,' said the little cousin, hesitating; 'but I like to do them well, because—because—Oh, you know.'

'No, I don't,' said Greta, 'tell me.'

But Marcia grew shy and red, and only after great persuasion could she be got to say that it was 'a text.'

'Oh, a text,' said Greta, carelessly; 'yes, we learn them, too, on Sundays.'

'But what text?' asked Bob, who was sitting on the arm of Marcia's chair.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," quoted Marcia, gravely.

"For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest," gabbled Greta; 'that was my text on Sunday week, but I don't see that that has much to do with children or everyday lessons: we aren't going to die yet, and if we were, learning our lessons well wouldn't help us.'

'Mother said so,' said Marcia, looking pleadingly at Bob, and then at Cyril.

Cyril took pity on her. 'You talk like a goose, Greta,' he proclaimed. 'Marcia is simply declaring a principle, that of doing all things thoroughly and well; which, of course, applies equally to the small as well as the great things in life.'

'Oh! but I didn't quite mean all that, thank you,' said Marcia, gratefully; 'and, indeed, I have another reason now to wish to do my lessons well, for when auntie thinks I am clever enough and strong enough, I am to go home,—back to India;' and her eyes glistened at the thought.

'Do you like your home so much, Marcia?' questioned Greta, softened in spite of herself.

'I should think so,' broke in Bob, 'elephants and tiger-hunts, and jolly country for riding in and exploring.'

'Yes, father likes all that when he gets a holiday,' said Marcia, warming; 'but, it is less the country I love than mother and Dick, and all of them,—something altogether that makes home. I have to try to make myself fit to go home,' she added, gravely; 'and so I must learn to do everything you do, cousin Greta, and be very industrious, as I shall perhaps have less time than you.'

'Marcia, are you a baby or an old woman?' broke in Greta, suddenly; 'sometimes I think you are one thing, and sometimes the other.'

'Well, Greta, you are polite!' declared Cyril, as the little cousin's cheeks grew more crimson than before.

But Bob squared matters by saying, 'Well done, Greta, I must say I had the question on my lips too; I do believe this small thing is a fairly changing, she is so wise, and some day we shall see her vanish inside a rosebud, or sail off on a butterfly.'

'Poetic!' remarked Cyril, 'rather a new line for Bob.'

And Marcia found courage to protest, 'I don't want to sail off yet though, till I know all of you cousins, and have learnt a great deal.'

'But, Marcia,' said Greta, getting back to the old subject, 'are you learning and working hard, because the text says we are going to the grave? I should not like such a dismal reason.'

'I am working for home, Greta,' said little Marcia, a half-puzzled look creeping over her face; 'against I go home; father is there, and mother, and I want to please them.'

'I say, Greta, don't worry the child,' said Cyril, loftily.

'But she began the text,' rejoined Greta.

'Only half, mother only made me learn half,' said Marcia, hurriedly. Then pausing, she added more quietly, 'I haven't thought much about the end of the text, dear Greta, yet; mother said the first part was enough to think about at present, but you know the grave is the way to another Home. I have got a little sister in that Home already.'

'What was her name?' said Greta; she had no little sister in Heaven to draw her thought upwards.

'Mildred,—little Mildred,' said Marcia, softly. 'I was only six then, but I recollect the day; mother was crying, but she stopped her tears when I asked for baby, and she said she had gone home. So if one home is like another, I shall be fit for both, I hope, by-and-by.'

'Marcia, you are a very odd child,' said Greta, decidedly, after a few seconds' silence; 'but you know it will be your duty not to learn too much also, for you are to get strong and tall in England, that is your mother's desire I know above everything.'

'Yes, Greta, that is true; and so will you or Bob put me on the swing? I mean to jump, and play, and swing, every day now.'

'All right!' said Greta, relieved. 'Oh, dear! what a comfort it is to have one's shoe firm once more; who taught you sewing, Marcia?'

'Mother,' said Marcia, briskly; 'she taught me everything,—all I know. Please come too, Bob, to the nursery, and, Cyril, and let us have a good game together now it is dusk.'

Cyril put his coins aside and yawned, it was not his habit to join in the games of his younger brothers and sisters; but the little new-comer was irresistible, and the four went upstairs to the nursery together, where they were greeted with shouts of joy by little Prince and Prue.

Marcia Vere was becoming an object of attraction to Cyril too. The simple, straightforward, little girl, who yet spoke words of wisdom that penetrated to the soul of the somewhat self-engrossed boy; she interested him in spite of himself, and then she was so frail and tender, so unlike bold, argumentative Greta, who was used to be knocked about and regarded as a boy herself, that she seemed quite a new element in the house.

(To be continued.)

THE TONGUE.

IF thou wishest to be wise,
Keep these words before thine eyes:—
What thou speak'st, and how, beware;
Of whom, to whom, when, and where.



Bob cutting a stick for Tip-cat.

Chatterbox.



Greta and Bob danced a sort of war-dance in the School.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 247.)

CHAPTER III.



MARCIA did like lessons, there was no doubt about that; and in spite of her small stature and childish looks, she was quite a match for Greta in the school-room; at first her tall cousin was hardly disposed to admit this, but a few plain words from Bob and her own sense of justice came at last to the rescue, and Greta, not an ungenerous girl at heart, allowed that Marcia was certainly her equal in book-learning.

In some things Marcia had not had the practice that had made them easy to Greta, and then either Cyril or Bob would come to the front with offers of assistance; Cyril specially devoting himself to his little cousin's arithmetic.

Perhaps this tried Greta as much as anything. 'You never helped me, Cyril, when I was struggling through the Rule of Three,' she declared one morning.

'Because you wouldn't have thanked me for help,' said Cyril, dryly.

'How do you know that?' persisted Greta; 'it seems to me you are doing all Marcia's.'

'Indeed, no, he is only explaining,' said Marcia, eagerly; 'but he does make it plain, and, Greta, I'm sure he would show you how to do those fractions; wouldn't you, Cyril?'

But Cyril only whistled, and Greta said, 'Thank you, but I prefer to find them out by myself!'

'I told you so,' said Cyril; 'some people won't be helped.'

'And some people are very particular whom they help!' muttered Greta.

'Hallo! go it!' said Bob, who rather liked a dispute for a change, to break the distressing murmur of—Multiply seven by twenty-five, and divide by forty-nine.

But poor Marcia looked distressed, and thanking Cyril for his efforts to enlighten her crept over to her own corner of the table, and arranged her books for Miss Milward. She was not used to bickerings, and when she could no longer believe them to be a strange kind of fun, they depressed her, and gave her what Bob called her 'Indian look'—in plain English, a fit of home-sickness. Dick and she never disputed, he was always glad to help her on, and why should Greta be vexed with Cyril for doing the same? It is very hard to put oneself in another person's place, and Marcia did not for some time discover that Greta was a tiny bit jealous of her place in 'the boys' affections, and her share in the boys' attentions. Greta herself had never been small and delicate, and in a position to need care and assistance; as a little girl, she had snatched and struggled with the boys as one of them, and side by side with Bob had battled her way from the A B C upwards. As to Cyril she never would have thought of asking his help in any matter; she would have told you he was wrapped up in himself, and did not care how other

people got on. And yet there was a tender spot in Cyril's heart if she could have reached it,—a spot that was nearly always covered up and hidden from general gaze, but which little Marcia had already discovered.

At intervals, too, Mrs. Tredthorpe guessed it, when she plaintively declared that the boys and Greta drove her wild with their noise, all except Cyril, who did sometimes remember that people had nerves, and was not always banging doors and whistling. She had noticed that Cyril half drew down a blind when she complained of headache, or gave up the one school-room armchair to her, when she visited that abode after school-hours; and these little acts pleased her better than Greta's rough kisses, or Bob's noisy inquiries after her health.

Greta always declared that Cyril was naturally quiet, and so suited mother best; but she wronged her elder brother, he was selfish doubtless, but there were moments when he could forget himself to succour the weak and helpless. Bob had 'got over,' as Greta would have expressed it, his first fancy for little Marcia, and had returned to the more congenial society and more equal companionship of his sister, so Cyril was now his cousin's champion and friend both in school and play-hours. Marcia did not want to 'take sides,' as Greta called it, but she could not but join with Cyril in an attempt to preserve quietness and order during school-hours, when poor Miss Milward looked weary and jaded with Bob's jokes over his tasks, and Greta's laughter at the same.

The schoolroom party was too large for the quiet, rather shrinking lady, though to oblige Mrs. Tredthorpe she had consented to take the two boys for the month which would bring them to the Christmas holidays. And so it came to pass that the scholars divided themselves into pairs, and Greta and Bob grew to be regarded as the troublesome ones. Marcia could not understand why Greta seemed to turn from her now; she meant no harm, poor child, and only wished to be friends with everyone; and it vexed her more than all when Miss Milward or Mrs. Tredthorpe rebuked Greta, and bade her take example by her cousin, who was always ladylike and gentle. Marcia felt that was not the way to make Greta like her better, but do what she would, she could not put things on a better footing.

Perhaps the holidays would set matters straight, that delightful time when they were all to go down to grandfather's house in Yorkshire, and revel in country pleasures such as Marcia had never tasted.

Cyril told her of delightful walks over the moors and fells, where, even in winter time, this or that treasure might be found to swell his Naturalist's Museum; and Bob would break in with descriptions of snow-men, and shooting expeditions, till Greta would pull him back, a naughty spirit urging her on, and bid him leave them alone, 'What would they care for such things?'

Then Marcia's face would fall, and Kensington Gardens or the schoolroom would look dull to her again, and all her little world would shadow over under the cloud of Greta's disdain.

Why would not Greta be friends, nor let Bob care for her either?

Poor Marcia puzzled over the question many a day. Holidays did bring a little brightness to her face, Greta could not keep away from her when there were boxes to be packed, books and playthings to be chosen, and arrangements to be made for the delightful month in Yorkshire. And then the children had a new topic for conversation and consideration. Just as the day drew near for the flitting northwards, letters came to announce that grandfather was laid up with rheumatic fever at the house of an old friend, and sorely needed Mrs. Tredthorpe to help to nurse him, his only unmarried daughter being unequal alone to the task. So Mrs. Tredthorpe hurried off one frosty morning to her father, instead of taking the young people to Yorkshire, and left everything unsettled and uncomfortable in Mornington Terrace.

Not for long, however, on the second day of her absence came a letter saying that grandfather was no better, and could not be moved for some time, but he wished the children to go down to Northholme as usual, and as soon as possible Aunt Charlotte should join them; till then they must be as good as possible by themselves, since Rachel, in charge of the twins, would be the only guardian sent with them. Mr. Tredthorpe could not leave his business till the day before Christmas. Mrs. Tredthorpe ended by entreating Greta to be more with Marcia than the boys, and to remember these holidays that she was growing too old to clamber fences and racket about as she had done. That last sentence spoilt all for a while, but the main subject of the letter was so exciting that Greta forgot her annoyance very soon in discussing it.

Poor grandfather! it was a pity he was ill; but only think what fun to have Northholme all to themselves, to do what they liked all day, and no grown-up people to order them.

Greta and Bob danced a sort of war-dance in the schoolroom on the spot, which made Marcia laugh so heartily that Cyril seized her too, and made her dance between them, and there was a general truce to uncomfortable thoughts.

'It will be stunning!' said Bob, when he had a moment to gasp in.

'Northholme is a capital place at Christmas,' put in Cyril.

'And we will have a Christmas Tree,' shouted Greta.

'And a plum-cake iced,' declared Bob.

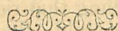
'And the Waits are so jolly,' declared Cyril.

'It's a stunning place for hide-and-seek,' pursued Bob.

'Oh! there's no end of fun to be got out of it, we can rush about all day, and roast chestnuts over the hall fire at night. The holiday tasks are the only worries we shall have.'

Poor grandfather! it is to be feared that but little pity could be spared for him, and yet the kind old man would have been the first to smile over this outbreak of pleasure, as a tribute to his home where his grandchildren were always so happy.

(To be continued.)



PEPIN LE BREF.



It is not the lot of many men to be the son of such a hero as Charles Martel (the Hammer), and the father of such a hero as Charles the Great. Such was the lot of Pepin le Bref: 'a man,' says Gibbon, 'whose hand was never lifted in vain, either in war or friendship.'

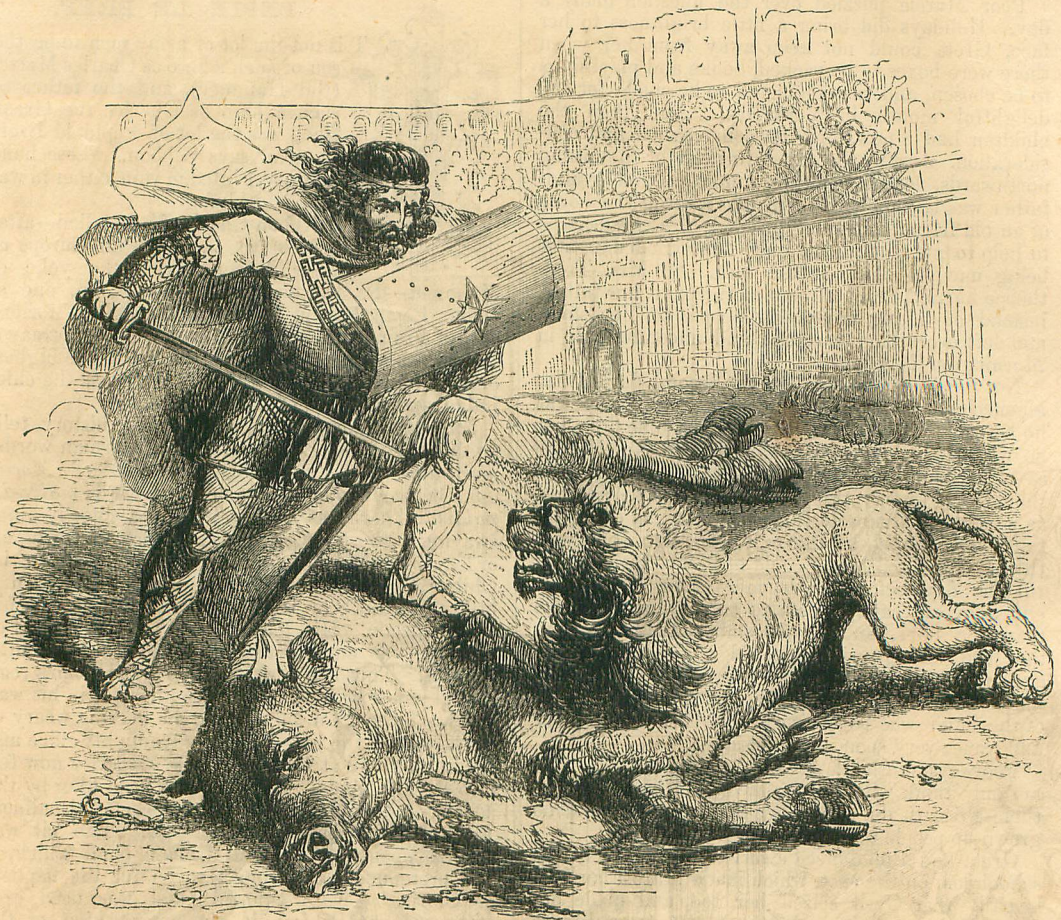
When Charles Martel died—after earning the thanks of all Europe as their deliverer from the yoke of Mahomet—he left two sons behind him, one of whom, Pepin, became 'Mayor of the Palace' for one part of France; the other, Carloman, acting as mayor for the remainder. This office was one of the highest dignity. The 'Mayor of the Palace' was the chief judge, and governor of State affairs.

Mrs. Markham, in her entertaining history, tells us that the name arose from two old German words, *mord-dome*, which meant 'judge of murder.' *Mord-dome* became *major domus*, and afterwards *maire du palais*. There was yet in France a ghostly king, swaying a ghostly sceptre, one of that Merovingian or long-haired race who sprang from the heroic Clovis. Chilperic was the name of this puppet king. In a little time the poor long-haired doll was put off his mock throne. His long hair—then the symbol of royalty—was cut off, and he was imprisoned in a convent. Thus one stumbling-block in Pepin's road to real power was removed. Another bar in his way was his brother Carloman; but he became weary of worldly state and care, and he gave up his office and became a monk at Rome. All the authority now fell into Pepin's hands. He was proclaimed king by the people, and anointed by the celebrated Boniface, Apostle of Germany, at Soissons. The oil was poured upon Pepin's head from a phial which, it was pretended, came from Heaven for the baptism of Clovis. This wonderful phial was used ever afterwards, at Rheims, in the consecration of the French kings.

What did Pepin le Bref now want to fill up the cup of his joy? Alas! Pepin was small—he could not look over men's heads—he was lost in a crowd. So his people, ever witty and sarcastic, called him 'Pepin le Bref,' meaning, 'Pepin the Little.' 'But,' says good Bishop Hall, 'the soul is the man. It is to small purpose that the body is a giant if the soul be a dwarf. All the streets of Jericho had not so tall a man as little Zaccheus.' The stature of Pepin was often the cause of rude remarks from ill-natured people who envied him. But God had put a brave soul into Pepin's little frame. He had great courage. He resolved to be equal to his station.

Some of his long-legged courtiers were one day making game of their monarch, and he overheard it all. He was, no doubt, much annoyed: but in his anger he was wise. He devised a plan which he thought would muzzle his insolent nobles from that day forth and for ever.

Into the arena, or amphitheatre, where sports were held for amusement, Pepin caused a wild bull, untamed and very dreadful, to be placed. Next a hungry



lion was let loose in the arena. The lion attacked the bull, and, after a struggle, got it to the ground.

'The bull has the worst of it,' cried the king, who sat on a sort of throne with his great men around. 'Will none of you, my lords, enter the lists and help the bull?'

Each noble shrank back from such an enterprise.

'Well, then,' said Pepin, 'if you will not, I will!'

So saying, the king leaped into the amphitheatre and slew both the lion and the bull. He then returned to his seat and sheathed his bloody sword amid loud shouts of praise; nor did any one ever utter another taunt against the small stature of their brave-hearted leader.

And that is the proper way, boys, of giving the lie to mischief-making tattlers and unfeeling mockers. None are so mean as those who despise the weak, who ridicule the humpbacked, and make fun out of the misfortunes of others. Such people are almost always bullies and cowards. Give them their answer, boys, as nobly as Pepin did. Show them you are their superior in everything that makes a manly lad. If Pepin had shown no other claim to greatness we should have held him no common man. He might

have stormed and threatened, he might have flung his insolent courtiers into prison, or hanged them on a tree; but he would have been laughed at and despised all the more. But, by clearly displaying an heroic spirit, his small stature was forgotten. And as he was in the arena so he was in the council-chamber and on the battle-field. After an active and brilliant reign he died, respected by princes, victorious over his enemies, and beloved by his people.

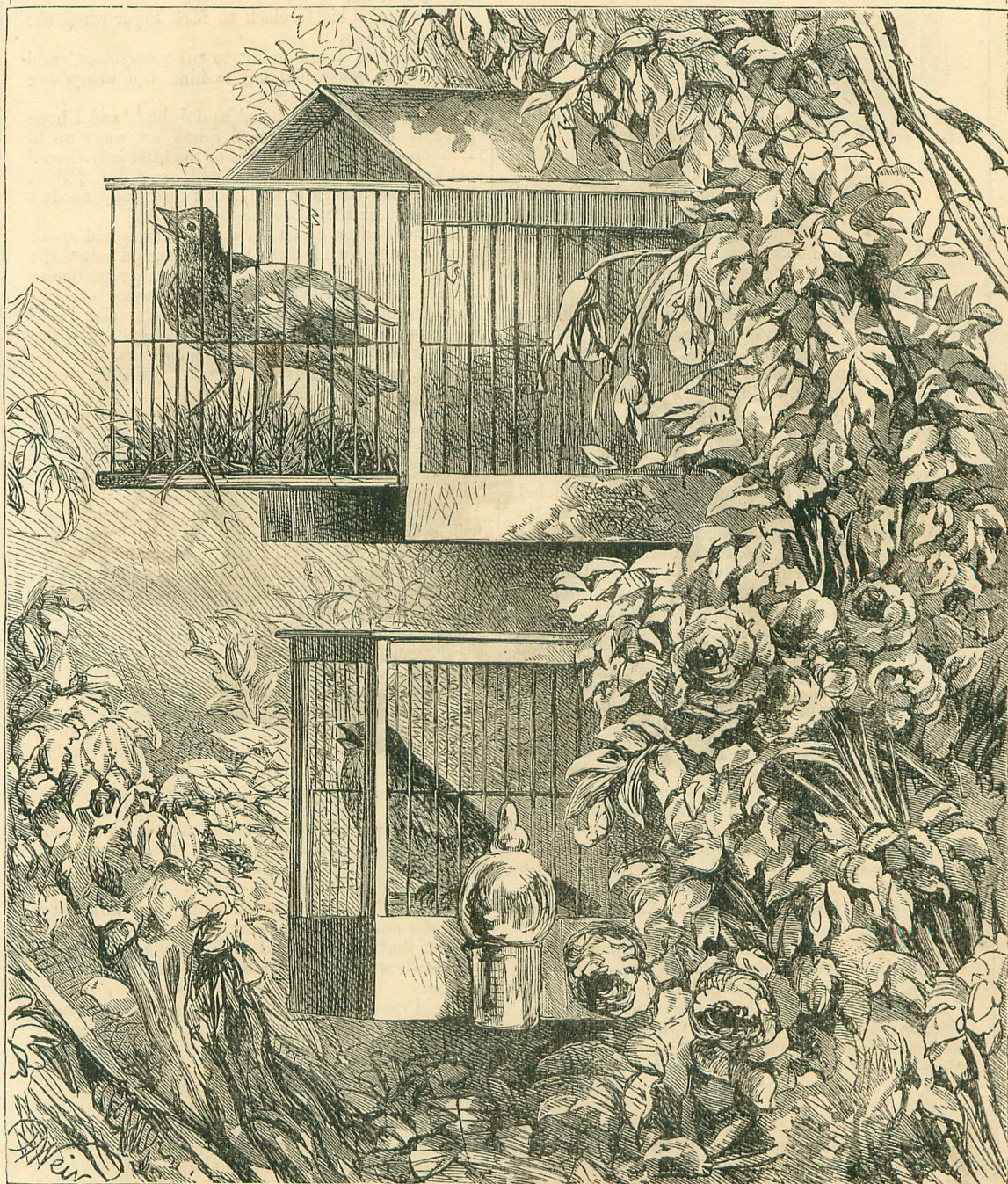
G. S. O.

THE LARK AND THE GREENFINCH.

BESIDE a door two cages hung:
From one a Lark's clear music rung;
A Greenfinch twittered in the other;
When, passing near them with his mother,
A little boy, delighted, heard
The tones of the melodious bird.

'Come,' said his mother, 'can you say
Which bird is trilling that rich lay?'

'Oh!' cried the child, 'the one in green,
The prettiest bird I've ever seen;



For surely that, which looks so plain,
Could never sing so sweet a strain !'
'Nay, child,' the mother said, 'you're wrong ;
'Tis he pours forth that thrilling song.

Look closely now,—see how his throat
Is quivering with each rising note ;
And never judge of birds or men
By outside finery again.'

W. R. E.

RACHEL'S VISIT TO LONDON.



MOTHER, missis is off to London next week to visit her married sister, and she's going to take me and the baby!

These words burst from the lips of a big girl of fourteen, who had rushed into a cottage where a poor woman was standing at the wash-tub.

'Take you to London, Rachel!' said Mrs. Mivins, clearing her hands of the soap-suds, and sitting

down for a moment's rest, 'Eh, dear, but you must be steady there, and not go laughing and chattering down the street as you do here.'

'Missis thinks a deal of me,' said Rachel, holding up her head; 'she says she never had a girl with such a notion of sewing as me, nor one the baby fancied so much, though I am so young.'

'Aye, and giddy, child, too! I know the missis is satisfied with you in most things, but she wouldn't have been pleased to see you last Sunday, chattering away to Bill and Sarah Fooks, while the baby got its frock drenched in the brook,' said the mother.

'You promised not to tell of me,' said Rachel, anxiously; 'and you'd never be so cruel as to set the missis against me now, and perhaps take Bessie the housemaid to London, instead of me!'

'No, I shan't tell now, though you ought to have done so at the time,' said the woman, wearily. 'You're but my step-child, and I wouldn't like to seem hard to you; but, Rachel girl, do have a care in London; it's a bad place for one so fond of company and gossip as you, and I'm half afraid of mischief coming to you or the baby.'

'In a week, mother!' laughed Rachel. 'Well, you are one to fret and fancy! But there's the clock going seven, and baby not put to bed! I only ran in to ask you to wash me out my best frock and a collar or two; the missis doesn't know I'm out, so I must be quick back. Tell father about my luck.' And off flew the girl.

Mrs. Mivins sighed and went back to her tub.

'The missis ought to know best,' she thought, 'but I'd be sorry to trust a child in that big London with a girl so fond of company as Rachel, clever as she is with her fingers.'

Mrs. Pryor, Rachel's mistress, was a linendraper's wife in the country town of Chawleigh. It seemed quite a grand place for the girl to get, since three servants were kept, and the previous nurse had been a much older person; but Mrs. Pryor was taken with Rachel's bright looks and strong appearance, and when she found her quick with her needle, she thought she had got a treasure, and overlooked her youth and inexperience.

Rachel had a busy time of it, helping her mistress to put her wardrobe in order for the London visit. Her own clothes were neat and whole, since she had only been a month with Mrs. Pryor, and the Mivinses always sent their children to service decently provided for. Baby, too, was to have a new pelisse and hat bought her in London; so there was little needed for her.

There was quite a little crowd at the station to see Mrs. Pryor off.

John pulled his forelock to Mrs. Pryor when she looked his way.

'Bessie and I are going to enjoy ourselves,' said Mrs. Pryor, gaily, nodding to him. She was young and light-hearted, too.

'Yes, ma'am, I hope so,' said John; 'and I hope my girl will be steady and mind her ways up in London, and take great care of the little lady there.'

'Yes, indeed, I hope she will,' said Mr. Pryor, smiling and dancing the child; 'for they needn't come back if they lose my little Rose.'

Rachel had promised her mother she would speak to no strangers while away from home, and indeed she said to herself, Why should she, since her particular friend, Alice Hardwright, was in service close to Mrs. Pryor's sister in London, and who else could she possibly want to talk to and go about with? Alice was so amusing; she was housemaid to a Mrs. Merton, at No. 3 Merivale Terrace, while they were to stay at No. 9, quite close by.

Rachel found London delightful, as she expected. Such gay carriages! such gaily dressed people! such shops! All the smartest things in the world in the windows, and so cheap! If only she had had money what wonders she would have bought!

As it was she did buy a pink feather for her hat, which Mrs. Martin (Mrs. Pryor's sister) privately advised easy little Mrs. Pryor to order straightway out of that hat. Rachel sulked for five minutes afterwards, but felt better when her too-kind mistress gave her a pair of real kid gloves to make up.

Baby liked London too, screamed with delight at the horses, and learned many new words; for, though two years old, she had been backward with her talking.

Rachel did not get much of Alice's company, since her mistress only gave her Sunday afternoons to walk out in; but once Alice got an odd hour or two to spend with her friend, when they walked in the Park together, and in Kensington Gardens, and Alice introduced Rachel to two nurses and a young woman out of a shop. So she had quite a large circle of acquaintances at once, and went home full of ideas about new bonnets and cheap gowns, till poor baby grew fretful at Rachel's disregard of her remarks. They always conversed out walking, when Rachel had no other friend with her, and baby could not understand this silence.

After that Rachel found it dull being in the Park and Gardens without a friend, and used to look out for one.

Mrs. Pryor was not a particular mistress—not half so strict as mother—and would not have been angry if she had found Rachel chatting to other nurses; all she said to the girl was,—

'Now, Rachel, whatever you do keep your eye on Miss Rosy. Don't let her run to the water's edge without your hand: and if you miss your way to the Park, why, get a policeman to put you straight. Remember what your master said about losing baby.'

Rachel always smiled and promised obedience, and went off with Miss Rosy, proud of the new blue pelisse and velvet hat, with the handsome feather, which set off the child's golden hair; for baby wore her best clothes every afternoon, now.

It was Friday (they had come on the Monday) when Rachel took her last walk in the Park. They were not to leave till the following Tuesday; so why should this be the last? You shall hear.

It was a brilliant spring day, and Rachel's arms ached with lifting baby up to see the grand carriages drive by; so she made her way to the grass, and sat down under a large tree, where she was shortly joined by one of the nurses she knew, who held a tiny baby in her arms, which was peacefully asleep.

Very soon they were in deep converse about frounces and trimmings, only interrupted every now and then by Rosy trotting up to show Rachel a daisy or a bit of stick that took her fancy.

Rachel was usually very kind to the child; but now she was too much interested in the conversation to care to prattle with her.

'There, go and play again,' was all she would say; so Rosy stared with her dark eyes to the strange nurse and the wee baby.

Presently a woman in a cloak, carrying a basket, came near the party, and stood still to watch the pretty little girl playing alone, and the two nurses in close conversation; then she spoke to Rosy, and held out a cake to her: but Rosy was shy, and trotted off to Rachel. So the woman began, in a winning tone, to open her basket and show the nurses papers of pins and bits of common lace which she had on sale.

Rachel wanted to buy, but her new friend whispered to her that she knew a shop where such things were cheaper and better; so they shook their heads and bade the woman begone. Rosy, meanwhile, was wondering in her little heart if that cake would be offered her again. She could have taken it now, under the safe shadow of Rachel.

But, no! the woman moved away under the trees, and Rosy was sent back to her daisies, and the nurses chattered on.

By-and-bye it got chilly, and Rachel suddenly thought herself it must be near tea-time.

'I shall certainly have a dress like yours,' she said, rising and stretching herself; 'those cross puffings are so pretty. But I must be off now. Where's my baby? Here, Rosy! Miss Rosy! come quick! Where is the child? She was under that tree just now.'

Oh, Rachel! that 'just now' was half-an-hour since. No Rosy was to be seen. First Rachel looked about; then, stirred by her uneasy remarks, the other nurse got up; and for twenty minutes they searched everywhere, calling 'Rosy! Rosy!' at the top of their voices.

Then Rachel gave up, and burst into a flood of tears. What was to be done? Miss Rosy was lost! The precious darling who was thought so much of at home. What would the missis say?

'She can't have come to any harm—there's no water, nor nothing to hurt her,' said the other nurse. 'She must just have strayed away. I advise you to go to the park-keeper. I must be off, or my missis will be in a way.'

And Rachel found herself left alone in her misery. Attracted by her sobs one of the park-keepers came up and listened to her piteous story. He could only advise her to go home and confess her loss, and then come again with help to look for the child.

And Rachel was humbled enough to take the

advice. She carried her tear-stained face to No. 9, and happily found Mrs. Martin alone. To her she told all; and Mrs. Martin broke the terrible news to poor Mrs. Pryor.

Rosy, toddling Rosy, lost in great London!

All that evening, and all night, and all next day, search was made for her; park-keepers, policemen, and all were on the alert to find the golden-haired, dark-eyed baby, in the new blue pelisse and feathered hat.

Mr. Pryor was telegraphed for, and all was misery at No. 9: for the baby could not be found. No one had seen her since the moment Rachel had sent her back to her daisies. She seemed to have vanished off the earth.

Rachel was questioned and counter-questioned by stern men in uniform coats and mild men in ordinary clothes. At last some one elicited a remark about the woman with the basket selling lace.

Then one man, cleverer than the rest, put his finger on the clue; and late on Sunday night a loud ring startled the miserable mother at No. 9. She and her sister and the servants ran into the hall—and there on the door-mat stood a tiny creature, all smiles and golden hair, nibbling a cake, and reckless of the fact that she was shoeless and hatless, and was only clothed in a little flannel petticoat!

'She's had my cape on all the way,' said the proud policeman who had brought her, and who now stood over her like a helmeted guardian angel. 'It's the dark eyes and the light hair as has traced her, with the mole on the arm. That woman with the basket is caught at last, and time she was; for this is about the twentieth case against her of child-stealing and stripping.'

No word of this did Mrs. Pryor hear; she was devouring her little child with kisses.

Yes, Rosy had been stolen for the sake of the blue pelisse while Rachel was so busy gossiping with her new friend, and she had been found almost naked, crying and hungry, in a low lodging-house in one of the worst parts of London.

'She came to me as if she knew I was a friend,' said the policeman, 'and I just bought her the cake and came straight on with her, for I guessed she were the little one wanted.'

By this time Mr. Pryor had come in, and the child was almost torn to pieces by her loving family; even Rachel was kissing one little bare foot while her tears burst out afresh.

'Go away, girl! your carelessness has half broken our hearts,' said her master, severely; but his face quickly changed, for Rosy was stroking away her nurse's tears and saying plaintively, 'Don't cry!'

'There, then,' he added, in a different tone, 'go and fetch the child some clothes; I can't be hard on you, just as God has been so good to us, and perhaps you have been punished enough.'

Yes, indeed, Rachel's punishment had been terrible, for she had dearly loved her little charge. It cured her of gossiping for life.

She remained with the Pryors, and was known for years as their careful, watchful nurse. But to her last day Rachel will shudder over the remembrance of that London visit, and of the time when they lost baby.

H. A. F.



The Woman in the Cloak offering Rosy a cake.

Chatterbox.



Jenny Wren.

JENNY WREN.



HERE are many stories afloat in the world about our bird friends, which come to the ears of all children, or find their way into their favourite story-books. These tales are sometimes true, sometimes all fable, but always delightful. Who does not like to hear of Robin Redbreast covering the Babes in the Wood with leaves? of Master Jack the Magpie, making a hoard of silver spoons and gold thimbles in a hollow tree? of the naughty Parrot in the docks, who loved a sensation, and was always crying out 'Help, help! I'm drowning?' and of the good Goose who led the blind old woman across the footbridge to church every Sunday?

But if you ask a child what he knows about Jenny Wren, he will probably answer carelessly—'Oh, she is rather a good, little, stupid thing, eating cherries and drinking currant-wine with Cock Robin all day.'

It is to give Jenny Wren her due, and to furnish her with a real story, that I am writing this to-day. You children, therefore, that read English history, turn to the reign of William the Third, and tell me the date of the battle of the Boyne.

'July the first, 1690.'

Very good; and now, what kind of weather was it likely to be on the first of July?

'Hot summer.'

Hot summer weather; yes, and so it was. And just before the battle the soldiers of King William's army felt uncommonly tired and sleepy, and very much inclined to take a nap, notwithstanding the near neighbourhood of the enemy. Of course, if grown-up soldiers fell asleep, a little drummer-boy could not be expected to keep awake, especially as he had just eaten his rations and felt particularly comfortable. While he slept, his companions nodding around him, a little wren spied some crumbs upon his drum-head, and straightway hopped upon it to pick them up. The noise of her little feet and her beak tapping on the parchment woke the lad, who no sooner glanced around than he spied the enemy advancing, and instantly gave the alarm. But for this little bird the sleepers might have been surprised, and the events of the day altered. As it was, the skill of William won him the victory, and James fled beaten from the field.

Here then is Jenny Wren's real story, the one little feather in her cap; so do not forget it. H. A. F.

A LESSON OF GRATITUDE.

A GENTLEMAN was once making inquiries in Russia about the method of catching bears in that country. He was told that to entrap them a pit was dug several feet deep, and, after covering it over with turf, sticks, and leaves, some food was placed on the top. The bear, if tempted by the bait, easily fell into the snare. 'But,' the informant added, 'if four or five happen to get in together, they all get out again.'

'How is that?' asked the gentleman.
'They form a sort of ladder by stepping on each other's shoulders, and thus make their escape.'
'But how does the bottom one get out?'
'Ah! these bears, though not having a soul such as God has given us, yet can feel gratitude; and they won't forget the one who has been the chief means of procuring their liberty. Scampering off, they bring the branch of a tree, which they let down to their poor brother, enabling him speedily to regain his freedom.'

THE STOLEN PRINCES.

A true Story of Saxon History, from the German by J. F. Cobb, Esq.



THE Emperor Frederick III., who reigned in Germany from 1439 to 1493, was a good man but a very feeble ruler. He had not energy and force for his great and difficult post. He did not like to have his repose disturbed, or to be disturbed in his favourite pursuits. Thus he once dismissed a council only because he was anxious to remove his flower-pots into shelter, as a frost was threatening. It is needless to say that in his days Germany was very disturbed, and badly governed.

It was during his reign, viz. from 1445 to 1450, that the two sons of the Elector Frederick the Warlike, of Saxony, waged a bitter and bloody war with each other. These brothers, Elector Frederick the Gentle and Duke William, had hitherto lived together in peace, but a restless and ambitious man kindled the flame of discord and civil war. This man was the Counsellor Apel von Vitzthum. He was often whispering in the ears of his master, Duke William of Saxony, and trying to persuade him that his brother, the Elector Frederick, had overreached him in the division of their inheritance. Duke William was a violent and hot-blooded man. The suggestions of his cunning and evil counsellor soon began to affect him; he made constantly higher demands upon his brother, and did this in a rude and haughty manner. Frederick the Gentle at first received these proposals with all honour; he yielded much to his brother, but as William would consent to no fair terms, civil war, with all its horrors, at last broke out.

At the court of the Elector Frederick, the knight Kunz von Kaufungen held the office of court marshal. He was a brave knight, who had rendered valuable services to his master on the field of battle; but he was a wild, passionate character, who violated shamelessly law and justice, discipline and order. It was natural that Apel von Vitzthum and Kunz von Kaufungen should hate each other, and should plan how, in the war which had broken out, they should cause each other as much mischief and suffering as possible. At the very beginning of the war, Apel had seized for himself all the property of Kunz which was situated in Thuringen; the revenge for this was not long delayed. During the prosecution of the war, still more valuable estates of Apel von Vitzthum fell into the Elector Frederick's power; he gave them

over at once to his court-marshal, Kunz von Kaufungen, to pay him for the loss he had suffered.

We cannot here describe all the horrors and desolation caused by this war between brothers. Natural love, however, at last put an end to the sad and ruinous quarrel. The hostile armies stood one day opposed to each other on either bank of the Elster. Duke William ventured some way in advance of his men, in order to observe the enemy's camp: a soldier who saw him, and who was a remarkably good shot, offered to the Elector Frederick to shoot the Duke, and thus put an end to the war. But the noble-minded prince quickly and firmly replied, 'Shoot wherever you like, only do not strike my brother.' These were words of a Christian and a brother, and they were not without a blessing. Duke William heard of them; his heart was touched, and inclined to peace; he dismissed this evil councillor, who had kindled and then fanned the flames of civil war. On an open field, in view of both their armies, the hostile brothers met each other and shook hands, and in January, 1451, peace was signed in Naumburg, after thousands had lost their lives and thousands more their property in this war.

The subjects of both princes heartily rejoiced at the return of peace. One man alone did not share in this joy, the electoral court-marshal Kunz von Kaufungen. When peace was concluded he was to restore the property of Apel von Vitzthum, and receive back in exchange his own possessions. This was only fair, but it did not please the selfish man. He knew very well that Apel's estates were much more valuable than his own; he did not care at all for law or justice, therefore he refused to restore the property. Then the Elector Frederick, as was right and just, made short work of the matter, and with a strong hand he put Apel von Vitzthum again in his possessions; but he banished the unjust and disobedient court-marshal from his court and from his land. Kunz departed from beautiful Saxony, and retired to his property of Eisenberg, in Bohemia. But he swore that he would be avenged on his sovereign, who had only acted according to law and justice.

As former marshal to the court, Kunz knew very well that the Elector's wife, Margaret, the sister of the Emperor Frederick III., lived with her two sons, Ernest and Albert, mostly at the Castle of Altenburg. He knew, further, that her husband, owing to the duties of his high office, was forced to be absent very frequently in different parts of his dominions. At these periods the Electress with her children remained alone, and under the protection of a small guard, at this castle. It would, therefore, not be very difficult to steal the two young princes, one of whom was fourteen years old and the other twelve, and to carry them off to Bohemia. In this way the knight saw that he could take a terrible revenge upon the Elector, whom he so fiercely hated; and if his evil plan succeeded, he would, in the two princes, possess two most valuable hostages, for whom he would be able to demand an immense ransom, and he hoped to obtain other advantages besides. He knew, too, how to win over a sly and trustworthy assistant for his plan; this was the Elector's cook, Hans Schwalbe; with him he consulted as to how he should carry out his wicked design.

It was the night of July 7th, 1455. The Elector was then residing at Leipzig; all the servants of the electoral court were assembled at a merry fête in the town of Altenburg. Hans Schwalbe fastened a rope ladder (which may be seen at the present day in the castle of Altenburg) to one of the windows of the castle. By this ladder Kunz von Kaufungen, accompanied by nine of his boldest companions, climbed the rock, and thus reached the window of the electoral castle. The men then crept along through dark passages in the castle to the bedroom of the two princes. They woke the poor boys from their slumbers, and threatened them with death if they offered the slightest resistance or uttered the least sound. Little Prince Albert, in his first terror, had crept under the bed. In his place the young Count of Barby, who slept with the two princes, was seized, and, with Prince Ernest, borne away down the ladder. Not till the robbers got below did they discover the mistake they had made. Kunz hastened back again, dragged Prince Albert out of his hiding-place, and brought him down to his companions.

This bold deed of violence had been performed as quietly as possible, and yet not so quietly that it had been altogether unobserved. The ears of a devoted mother hear very sharply, even in the night and in the midst of sleep. The Electress had been awakened by a slight noise. She had got up quickly, and gone to look after her beloved children. The robbers had bolted her bedroom door fast, so that she could not come out. She opened the window, and heard the weeping of her children, and knew the voice of the former marshal of the court. Then she called out of the window, with all the anguish of a tortured mother's heart,—

'Oh, good Kunz, do not act so badly to me and to my dear husband; on my knees will I beg that your demands may be granted, only give me back my children again. Spare them, spare them, I implore you!'

But all her tears and prayers were vain to soften the hard heart of the robbers. The horses they had brought with them and concealed were soon led out, and mounted. The fierce Kunz seized Prince Albert, and put him on his own horse, the bridle of which he held with a firm hand, and galloped off towards the forest. Mosen and Schönfels, his trusty helpers, took charge of the elder brother, Ernest. It had previously been arranged that they were to flee by different ways, and meet in Eisenberg, if everything prospered. Whilst the poor Electress still stood lamenting, weeping, imploring, the robbers with their prey galloped off, and had soon disappeared from sight.

The Princess's cry of agony had penetrated through the castle, and far away into the silent night. The sentinels, the servants, the citizens, hastened up, and heard with horror the terrible news. Whoever could, armed himself quickly, and mounted his horse, to pursue the robbers and try to take their prey away from them. The alarm-bells were rung first in Altenburg, and then through all the towns and villages of the country, in order to rouse the people, and urge them on to the pursuit of the robbers. But the poor mother fell on her knees and prayed to God that He would protect her beloved children in the robbers' hands, and bring them back again to their father's



Castle of Altenburg.

house and to their mother's heart. But it seemed as if the Lord did not hear her prayer.

When the dark deed had been discovered and the pursuit was begun the robbers had already got a long start. Notwithstanding all their efforts the pursuers could find no trace of the fugitives anywhere. After many hours of vain and fruitless search the whole party returned, downcast and crestfallen, to the castle, without having had the smallest success.

Those were sad and anxious hours in the electoral castle at Altenburg; yet the merciful God had heard the prayer of the unhappy mother. By the next day Kunz von Kaufungen, who had chosen the most solitary paths, had reached the neighbourhood of Grünhain and Elterlein: he was only two hours from the Bohemian frontier. He felt certain that he should now get himself and his captives safely across. A thick forest hid him from the eyes of his pursuers, but horses and riders had become faint and exhausted. The young prince, too, was hungry and

thirsty, and begged to be allowed only to pluck a few strawberries in the wood. The knight permitted this, and alighted himself, too, from his horse, to rest a little; while, at the same time, he allowed his two servants to do likewise.

In those extensive forests there lived then a number of charcoal-burners, earning a scanty subsistence by hard toil and labour. It was a hot, sultry day, and deep silence reigned around. Beneath the shadow of an old tree a charcoal-burner, one George Schmidt, was sitting at this time, taking his frugal dinner, which his faithful dog was sharing with him. At dawn of day he had sent his nephew, Urban, to whom he was teaching his trade, to the nearest village, to buy some necessary provisions for his family. The lad was now returning in great haste, and, breathless, he began to tell his uncle at once the wonderful news he had brought back with him.

'Only think, master! our princes have been stolen out of the Castle of Altenburg; the Elector has



Prince Ernest borne away down the ladder.

sent men throughout the whole land to search for the robbers, and the alarm-bells are ringing everywhere!

These tidings deeply interested the honest charcoal-burner. While he was thinking about them, he was suddenly aroused by the barking of his dog; he grasped at once his huge wooden club, which he used as a poker for stirring up the fire, and followed the animal. Great was his surprise when, at a little distance off, he beheld several horses and armed men before him—a very rare sight in this solitude. But he was specially struck with the pleasing figure of a boy, whom he saw at once to be of noble birth. Immediately the thought flashed upon him that this extraordinary sight had to do with the carrying off of the princes from the Castle of Altenburg. With a firm step and confident manner he went up to the knight, looked him full in the face, and asked him, stoutly,—

‘Which way did you come, and whither are you going?’

Kunz replied,—

‘A bad boy has run away from his master, and I am taking him back to him again.’

The knight had scarcely said these words, when, catching his spur in the root of a tree, he fell to the ground. Prince Albert profiting by this accident, ran up to the charcoal-burner, and whispered in his ear,—

‘I am a prince of Saxony, who has been stolen away. Save me; my father will reward you!’

(Concluded in our next.)

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 251.)

CHAPTER IV.



MR. TREDTHORPE was such a busy man that, except on Sundays, the children saw little of their father, and beyond choosingschools for the boys, tipping them now and then, and generally giving a good-natured glance into the schoolroom before starting for the City in the morning, he had but small share in their lives. The boys thought him generous and kind, but held that Greta was his favourite, sending her to ask for any favour

that would require pressure, such as an extra holiday, or a visit to the Tower or the Zoological Gardens.

Mrs. Tredthorpe had once tried referring great offenders to him for punishment when Miss Milward complained of idleness or disobedience in the schoolroom, but it would not do. When Greta, as a little girl, had been sent up to him to be punished for some act of rebellion, she had gone up defiant and sulky, and returned, not with a sentence of a day in bed, or shut up in the schoolroom with a lesson-book, but with a smiling face and—a silver shilling in her hand. Father could not bear to see his bright little girl's face overclouded, and had taken this easy way to restore smiles and sunny weather.

Miss Milward looked surprised, and Mrs. Tred-

thorpe said ‘Father could never deal with naughty children;’ but somehow, though it would not do to adopt his system, it suited Greta: she took pains to be good long after the shilling was spent, and felt she was on honour to behave well when father had been so kind.

There was some surprise in the schoolroom, therefore, when, the evening before starting for Northholme, a message arrived that the four elder children were wanted in the dining-room, Mr. Tredthorpe had something to say to them.

‘It must be our Christmas-boxes which he is going to give beforehand,’ guessed Bob.

‘Or directions about the journey,’ said Greta.

‘Come along,’ said Cyril; ‘your face is all black, Bob.’

‘Father won't mind,’ retorted Bob: ‘I have been groping for my knife in the coal-box. Now, Marcia.’

There was dessert on the table in the dining-room, and it appeared as if Mr. Tredthorpe had only invited the children in to have some, till, nine o'clock striking, he put Greta off his knee, where she had perched herself, and began fumbling in his pocket for a letter.

‘Mother's directions about Northholme,’ he explained. ‘Dear, dear, where was it? In his office coat, he remembered. Well, he could not get it now, that was plain; but they were simple enough,—the boys were not to get into mischief, and Bob was not to think of touching a gun unless the keeper went out with him. The holiday tasks, too, were to be remembered, and an hour every morning was to be given up to them. Greta and Cyril were to be responsible as the elders, and some one was to write twice a-week.’

‘And we may do exactly as we like all day, when the horrid tasks are done?’ asked Greta.

Mr. Tredthorpe smiled.

‘Get up when we like, go out when we like, and enjoy ourselves awfully!’ put in Bob.

‘But who's to decide things when we all want to do differently?’ demanded cautious Cyril.

‘Draw lots,’ suggested Greta.

‘Think what we at home should wish you to do,’ said Mr. Tredthorpe, ‘and go by that.’

‘One always has one's own sense of right to direct one,’ said Cyril, rather pompously.

‘Yes, boy,’ said his father, ‘but at ten and twelve the “sense of right” and power of judgment are apt to be lost at times in fun and excitement. Just fancy mother or myself standing by when you are all meditating any special piece of mischief, and see how that will calm you.’

‘I wish you could be there sometimes, daddy dear,’ said Greta: ‘you are great fun in the holidays, when you have your gaiters on and your gun over your shoulder.’

‘Pop! pop! won't we have fun?’ put in Bob, directing the poker gun-wise towards the chandelier. ‘Father, when Roland comes, may I go out alone with him?’

‘No, boy, stick to Rogers,’ was the answer; ‘and mind my little ones in the plantations: don't let me have Prince or Prue peppered by one of you young hands.’

‘As if it was likely!’ said Bob, with scorn.

‘And take care of the little cousin among you,’

continued Mr. Tredthorpe: 'remember, she is not used to rough ways. Eh, Marcia?'

Marcia smiled, though tears were very near the surface: those few words about home had touched her very nearly. She had a father, too, and a mother who wrote loving letters, but they were far away, and all she could do was to think what they would like her to do. Not to cry, certainly; so she winked violently and answered cheerfully,—

'I'm getting very strong, now, Uncle, and I'm sure I shall enjoy Northholme.'

'Then to bed with you all,' said her uncle; 'for you must start early to-morrow.'

Northholme was really a house to dream of, with grey stone walls, castellated towers, and a real moat (dry, now, and lined with the dearest short grass, Greta told Marcia) all round it. This moat had been partially filled up at the back, but in front you drove over a real drawbridge, and across a paved court, and rang a loud bell under an archway, which sounded very imposing.

Very imposing, and very pleasant, too, to the closely-packed carriage-full of children as they drew up at the great door late in the evening of a winter's day. In the hall blazed an immense fire; and the dining-room beyond showed more lights, more fires, and a well-spread table.

Marcia had half consented to being taken straight off to bed with Rachel and the twins in the last few miles' journey, but now, how could she deny Bob the pleasure of showing her all this brightness and comfort?

She submitted to be put into an arm-chair and have tea and chicken brought her; and she answered as well as she could all the demands for sympathy and admiration, till something called her three cousins out of the room, and then she fell asleep in her warm corner; whence Mrs. Mack, the cook, peering in to see how the little ladies and gentlemen looked this Christmas, bore her off to Rachel.

Marcia saw no more of Northholme that night.

The morrow began delightfully—frosty and sunny. Every one was up early; and an exploring expedition began directly after breakfast.

News of grandfather had arrived; he was really better, and Aunt Charlotte hoped to be with them in ten days at farthest—to keep Christmas, in fact—so there was nothing to cloud their pleasure.

All day the corridors resounded with merry voices; and old servants smiled on the disturbers of the peace, and said it was just like old times come back. Marcia was overjoyed to find many people who knew and remembered Miss Lily, her mother, and she resolved that her first quiet time should be given to a long Indian letter, all about the dear old home. Of course as yet no one was allowed to sit still a moment; even Prince and Prue's little red legs were perpetually in motion, and Marcia was really glad when tea-time and shut-up windows and doors gave a chance of rest.

But Bob was highly indignant when, at eight o'clock, she got up to go to bed; and even Greta said that at Northholme such things were quite different to London—even Prince and Prue sat up later. So Marcia sat on, and listened to Bob's tales about shooting, and fishing, and skating, till her eye-

lids drooped with fatigue, and Rachel came in to ask when they were all going to bed.

'Not yet,' said Bob; and continued his discourse.

'Your mother would not like you to be up so late, Miss Greta,' persisted Rachel.

'She never said so,' declared Greta; 'nor father either;' and sat on.

The result of late hours at night was late hours in the morning. After the first three days, when Marcia waited hungrily for the others to come down, her breakfast was provided for her at half-past eight—the Northholme hour—and, with some grumbling among the old servants, breakfast dawdled on to ten for the rest.

Marcia tried to get the first hour after breakfast for the holiday task; but this, again, was a difficulty, and to the great distress of her tender conscience the lessons had either to be left undone or scrambled over at some unsuitable time. At last she summoned courage to tell Greta that she meant to do her lessons regularly at half-past nine every morning.

'Then I will do mine then, too,' said Cyril.

Bob was on the eve of declaring that he would also get up and join them, when Greta exclaimed—

'Very ill-natured of you, Marcia, when you know we can't be ready then. Why can't you wait till evening?'

'Auntie said morning,' pleaded Marcia.

'It is the spirit not the letter that should be regarded,' declared Greta, recollecting a speech of Cyril's. 'Mother only wanted to be sure of our doing them.'

Marcia did not wish to be ill-natured or bent on taking her own way, so she gave in, and seven o'clock was settled as the lesson-hour.

She was always terribly sleepy then, and Bob regularly took his Latin grammar, lay on the hearth-rug, and fell fast asleep, waking at eight to say, 'There, that's all right!' slam his book, and set off to visit Rogers and arrange plans for the morrow.

'Bob, you can't have learned anything, I heard you snoring all the time,' Greta would say.

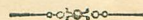
But Bob was off out of hearing.

Cyril never tried to work with the rest; he said he wanted his evenings to arrange his museum and make up his diary: when he did his lessons no one knew—'in bits at a time,' Greta declared; 'which was not fair, and not what mother meant when she demanded an hour's work.'

Greta herself was pretty regular at her work at first, but was apt to be carried away to see bonfires or special stars by Bob, if he woke during the course of the hour.

In fact, before the end of a week the holiday tasks were in a very poor way, and Marcia, falling asleep with Bob one evening over them, woke to Greta's reproaches and the pricks of her own conscience. These lessons were the only restraint imposed on them, and Marcia felt very unhappy at her neglect of them; and she determined that she must speak to Greta, and get her to consent to their being done earlier in the day.

(To be continued.)





"I wish you could be there sometimes, daddy dear," said Greta.

Chatterbox.



Cyril struggling with Bob for the gun.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 263.)

CHAPTER V.



It was Sunday morning; the young Tredthorpes had been to church, and in their trim Sunday garments made now a pretty picture in the large old dining-room.

A pretty picture, and that was all, for high words were passing between Cyril, Greta, and Bob.

Things had not gone well at Northholme in the last two days, and a great deal of fault-finding was now taking place among the young people.

Cyril had rebuked Bob for being seen with a gun and without Rogers, and also for firing off the said gun in the yard just behind the house, when the rule commanded it to be done outside the farm-yard enclosure. Bob had defended himself by saying Rogers was ill, and so he had been obliged to take the boy instead; and retorted that Cyril needn't be such a prig, for he was doing just what father most disliked—taking up with that young Morley of the Beeches. And then Greta put in that Bob was right about Morley; and Cyril should not have taken that book from him over the pew-top in church-time, nor read it during the sermon: though, to be sure, it was not much worse than Bob yawning all the while and kicking her dress till it was all Rachel could do to get the mud off.

The dispute went on during dinner, making little Prince and Prue open their eyes with amazement, while Marcia looked on, scared and unhappy. She got into trouble, too, after a while, for on Bob applying to her to support certain of his statements, Cyril and Greta had both attacked her, telling her that father had put them in charge, not her, so it was no use her speaking.

After dinner Bob bounced off into the farm-yard, Cyril sat by the fire with young Morley's book, and Greta put on her hat and disappeared no one knew where. Rachel came in with the little ones presently, and put them in Marcia's charge while she went to afternoon church.

Prince and Prue were beamingly happy, sitting on their little stools, one on each side of cousin Marcia. They said their hymns in very imperfect English, and heard the story of Joseph for the hundredth time out of their coloured picture-book, and then Prue said shortly—'Tell about India'; and Marcia, nothing loth, began, and told about brother Dick out there; his pony that drank coffee and stood on its hind-legs and begged; of little baby Tom, just a year old; of her pets and toys; of her father and mother: in fact, of all the dear surroundings of her Indian home.

'I am going back there some day,' said Marcia to her little hearers.

'No, don't!' said Prue, distressed. 'She mustn't go; must she, Prince?'

Prince nodded a strong disapproval of Marcia leaving England, and Marcia smiled and said,—

'But I want to go some day, darlings. I love my home; I think of it every day; I am making myself ready for it always.'

'Don't go!' said Prue, again.

But Marcia did not hear her; she was silent awhile, the dear home had risen up before her, and she was thinking. Was she doing all to fit herself for it? Was she, day by day, behaving as mother would have her do? Had she not felt fretful and vexed with Greta that very afternoon, and, instead of asking her to stay quietly with her, let her drift off she did not know where? This was the second Sunday at Northholme, and last Sunday the cousins had sat happily together after church, amused the little ones, read their books, and gone to bed, content that mother and father would have been pleased with them. Something had gone wrong altogether now, and Marcia did not try to prove herself guiltless.

While she was thinking, Cyril started up from his seat and left the room with an angry ejaculation, and Prue flew to the window with the cry of 'I see Bob!'

The sound of a wrangle in the court outside roused Marcia at last, and to her horror she saw Cyril struggling with Bob for the possession of a gun.

'You've no right to it on Sunday!' said Cyril.

'And you've no right to it at all!' said Bob.

Their eyes blazed, and a struggle began.

Marcia tried to open the window; but just as she made the attempt a loud report shook the room, broken glass showered all around her, and little Prue, with one terrified scream, fell off her chair on to the ground.

In a moment the room seemed to fill; servants and children crowded round.

'You've shot her dead!' said little Prince, at last, startled into words.

Bob and Cyril, pale and terrified, stood by, while Rachel lifted the little girl and searched over the fair head for some mark of the terrible weapon.

But Marcia, with white, trembling lips, gasped out, 'It wasn't the gun, Rachel; look at the pane: the shots went through far above her head. I think she is only frightened; I think it is a fit.'

Poor Bob! he breathed more freely, and set off to fetch the doctor in all haste.

How he loved cousin Marcia for those words, which at first could hardly be believed!

When Prue stretched out her little arms and opened her blue eyes, which yet had no sense in them, the women began to think that quiet little Miss Vere might be right, and Rachel carried the child off into the nursery as soon as the way was cleared; and there, to her surprise, stood Marcia and the kitchen-maid over a bath of hot water.

'You must put her in that at once,' said Marcia, trembling no more, but very decided. 'I know; our little Tom had fits.' Then she soaked a cloth in cold water and held it on Prue's head, while Rachel supported the child in the water.

Every one obeyed the little self-possessed girl, who spoke so earnestly yet so gently.

'Go away, please, all except Rachel and Mrs. Mack,' she begged; 'and give Prince some comfits to make him leave off crying. I want the room to be quite quiet when she wakes.'

When the doctor came, Prue was lying calm and sensible on Rachel's lap. The doctor asked what had been done, and pronounced Marcia's treatment perfectly correct.

Little Prue had been quite untouched by Bob's gun; but the shock had brought on convulsions: later in the day they came on again, and as Doctor Ferrars would allow no one, not even Marcia, to go into the nursery, the poor children sat huddled up and miserable downstairs.

Bob had confessed that he was on his way to shoot an owl the keeper's boy had just shown him in the south tower. Greta had greatly desired one with which to make a feather screen; and he had somehow persuaded himself that it was only kind to make sure of it at the moment.

Cyril had seen him crossing the court, and had rushed out hotly to convict him of breaking rules. In the struggle that ensued the gun had gone off, to the damage of the window, of the portrait of Aunt Prudence over the mantelpiece, and, it was to be feared, to the lasting injury of poor little Prue.

Marcia terribly longed for her mother that dreary evening, when Prince wailed and sobbed for Rachel and Prue and might not go near them, and the rest sat moodily round the fire and longed for bedtime.

Greta had come in at dusk, cold and weary, and terrified by the half-tidings that a farm-lad had brought her.

'Will Dr. Ferrars telegraph to mother?' she asked.

'What's the use of that?' said Bob, hurriedly. He was not anxious to see either mother or father just then.

'Telegraphing would only frighten her to death, and do no good,' said Cyril, coldly.

'But she ought to know,' said Greta.

'Do hold your tongue, Greta!' declared Bob: 'can't you leave us in peace a minute?'

Marcia was very tired, and very much inclined to keep out of a discussion; but she roused herself to say, 'Dr. Ferrars will write—he said so. Oh, Bob dear, could you hold Prince? he is asleep, now, and he is breaking my arm.'

Poor, self-reproaching Bob, came gladly to her aid; his arms ached, too, after a while, with clasping the heavy little boy, but the bodily pain prevented his heart aching so much, and that was a comfort.

By-and-by Mrs. Mack came and carried Prince off to put him in her bed, and then the four were left alone with their thoughts.

Not very happy ones to the young Tredthorpes.

Cyril stole out of the room with a muttered remark about a book to read, returning with one in his hand, and the observation that Dr. Ferrars seemed to be having rather a jolly supper in the day-nursery.

The speech cheered Bob, as he secretly intended it to do; and the boy stretched himself and observed—

'I say, Marcia, you know, your little Tom came all straight again after his fits, didn't he?'

'Quite straight,' said Marcia; then pausing she added, 'but, Bob dear, his came from teething, not from fright.'

'Is it worse to be frightened?' questioned Bob, in a tone that almost sounded surly.

'I'm afraid so, Bob dear,' answered Marcia.

Then silence fell again on the four, broken by a sigh from Greta.

'We are all wrong,' she said; 'I wonder if we shall ever get right?'

'We went to church,' said Cyril.

'I never listened to anything; did you, Bob?', asked Greta.

Bob shook his head and said, 'Shut up!'

'Marcia did, I know,' pursued Greta, 'for I saw her lips moving at the prayers. Marcia, how do you keep good and remember to do right?'


'I don't, Greta,' said Marcia, blushing; 'but church, you know, is almost like going home to me. I hear the old things, and I know mother, and father, and Dick hear them, and I can't help attending. Oh, dear, dear, when shall I go home?' And to the distress of herself and the alarm of her cousins, poor, frightened, shaken, tired Marcia, burst into an agony of tears.

She soon stopped them, and almost laughed at the consternation she had caused. Cyril had fetched her a glass of water; Bob had seized on Mrs. Mack's immense salts-bottle, which the kitchen-maid borrowed every Sunday afternoon for church; and Greta was stroking her hair and begging her not to cry.

'How kind you all are! I love you!' said Marcia: and they all crept quietly off to bed.

(To be continued.)

THE OLD HEN AND THE COCK.

 S an old Hen led forth her train,
And seemed to peck to show the grain,
She raked the chaff, she scratched the ground,
And gleaned the spacious yard around.
A giddy chick, to try her wings,
On the well's narrow margin springs,
And prone she drops. The mother's breast
All day with sorrow was possess.

A Cock she met; her son she knew;
And in her heart affection grew.

'My son,' says she, 'I grant your years
Have reached beyond a mother's cares.
I see you vigorous, strong, and bold;
I hear with joy your triumphs told.
'Tis not from cocks thy fate I dread,
But let thy ever-wary tread
Avoid yon well; that fatal place
Is the sure ruin of our race.

He thanked her care; yet day by day
His bosom burned to disobey,
And every time the well he saw
Scorned in his heart the foolish law:
Near and more near each day he drew,
And longed to try the dangerous view.

'Why was this idle charge?' he cries:
'Let courage female fears despise.
Or did she doubt my heart was brave,
And therefore this injunction gave?
Or does her harvest store the place
A treasure for her younger race?
And would she thus my search prevent?
I stand resolved, and dare the event.'



Thus said, he mounts the margin s round,
And peers into the depth profound.
He stretched his neck ; and from below
With stretching neck advanced a foe :
With wrath his ruffled plumes he rears,
The foe with ruffled plumes appears :

Threat answered threat ; his fury grew ;
Headlong to meet the war he flew ;
But, when the watery death he found,
He thus lamented as he drowned :
‘ I ne’er had been in this condition
But for my mother’s prohibition.’

Gay's Fables.



THE STOLEN PRINCES.

(Concluded from page 262.)

THE squire, Schweinitz, who had heard these words, aimed a blow at the prince's head, but, fortunately, the charcoal-burner parried it with his club, and the powerful dog at once seized the squire, while Schmidt fell upon the knight, who had not yet had time to get up, dealing him tremendous blows, and only ceasing at the supplication of the kind-hearted boy. Schmidt's wife, meanwhile, who had heard the noise, and feared that her

husband's life was in danger, at once gave a signal by striking a huge hammer on a copper vessel; it sounded far and wide through the wood. It was a well-known sign of distress, and when they heard it, the charcoal-burners hastened up from all sides to help their comrade, armed with their clubs. They made short work now with the knight and his two squires, who soon lay fast bound upon the ground.

While the prince was taken to the charcoal-burner's cottage, to refresh himself with food, a number of the men carried the robbers off to the monastery of Grünhain, whence, on the same day, they were sent off under a trusty guard to Zurikau. But Prince Albert, accompanied by the brave charcoal-burner, started next morning for Altenburg, to his sorrowing mother.

Thus one prince was saved, but what had become of the other? Of Prince Ernest's fate no one knew anything. Mosen and Schönfels, the two knights whom Kunz had engaged to carry off this prince, had fled by another road to the Bohemian frontier. They came to the neighbourhood of Hartenstein, where, hard pressed by their pursuers, who by the ringing of the bells had assembled from all sides, they had hidden in a cave. While they were here concealed, and in tolerable safety, they consulted what they should do further. They had become rather frightened; it seemed to them, under the circumstances, impossible to reach the Bohemian frontier undiscovered, and to bring their hostage thither in safety. One day, Mosen met a woodcutter in the forest, with whom he engaged in conversation; from him he learned that Kunz von Kaufungen had been captured, and lay in chains. This news terrified him and his companion still more, and both consulted together how they could escape from the threatening danger. At last they agreed what to do. They wrote a letter to the commanding officer, Friedrich von Schönburg, in Hartenstein, informing him that, if he would grant them a full pardon, they would deliver Prince Ernest up to him. If this assurance was not given they would kill the prince, and save themselves by flight. The officer, at first, did not know how he should answer this letter. He inquired, therefore, of the Elector. He gave him full powers to grant the robbers' request. So Mosen and Schönfels at once delivered up the captive prince at Hartenstein. They then hastened to reach the Bohemian frontier, to place their lives in safety.

The same night that the prince was delivered up, a message was sent from Hartenstein to the town council of Freiberg with the good news. When this was proclaimed next morning in the town, all the people assembled together in crowds, shouting for joy. They rushed into the churches and rang all the bells, so that all true Saxon hearts, both far and near, might share their joy and gratitude to God. While the bells were ringing out so clearly and merrily to proclaim that the noble princes, the hope of Saxony, had been delivered from the grasp of the robbers, Kunz von Kaufungen, who meanwhile had been brought from Zwickau to Freiberg, was taken from his dungeon to the Rathhaus to be tried. Sentence was passed upon him, and he was then led into the market-place, where the scaffold was erected; there his sentence was once more read before him, and he was then beheaded. This took place on 14th July, 1455, just a week after the day when he had performed this bold and wicked deed. His two squires were also executed, and the traitor, Hans Schwalbe, suffered a more fearful death than the rest, being put to the torture, as was the custom in those barbarous days, and afterwards hung, drawn, and quartered.

Great was the joy of the parents when they learned that their firstborn son was also now in safety, and delivered out of the hands of the robbers. Both princes were brought back to Altenburg in a triumphant procession. There was joy and happiness throughout Saxony. The bells rang in all the towns and villages through which the procession passed. The streets were everywhere decorated with triumphal arches and garlands of flowers. Hundreds and thou-

sands of faithful subjects everywhere waited to behold and greet the rescued sons of their beloved Elector. But the best greetings and the loudest shouts of joy came from the brave charcoal-burners, who, by special command of the Elector, had come to Altenburg. At last the solemn and joyous procession entered the town. With what eager eyes did the two princes again behold their father's castle, from which they had been dragged in so cunning and malicious a way; and how warmly did their parents kiss and embrace their beloved children, who had been stolen from them by man's wickedness, and now by God's mercy were restored to them again! Then the Elector and his consort, with their children, and all the people who were present, went to church, to thank God for His mercy and wonderful assistance. Here hymns of praise from happy hearts arose, as a joyful thank-offering, to the throne of Almighty God.

The service over, the Elector, his wife and children, returned to the castle. And now the honest charcoal-burner, George Schmidt, was summoned into his sovereign's presence, to receive the well-deserved reward for his valour. The brave, modest man stood, timid and blushing, before the Elector. Frederick held out his hand, kindly and gratefully, to him; heartily did he press the right hand of a man who had fought so bravely for himself and his child. Now the good charcoal-burner had to tell how it had all happened. This he did in a quiet and simple speech. But when he mentioned that by his club he had 'very much shaken the robber,' the Elector smiled, as did all the courtiers, at his words.

When he had finished his story, the Elector thanked him heartily for the service he had rendered to him, and for the joy he had caused for himself and his household; then he added,—

'But now ask a favour of me, that I may reward you for the good you have done to me and my wife.'

George Schmidt had not thought of asking for or of receiving any reward, so he did not know what to say or what to ask. But at last he stuttered out,—

'Well, my lord, if I must make a request, I will beg to have wood for charcoal-burning free for all my life.'

The Elector smiled, and said,—

'That you shall have, indeed, brave man! But that is not enough. I will give you and your posterity a fine estate, so that you may live in comfort for the rest of your life. And because you *shook* those evil robbers, as you say, so thoroughly, you shall henceforth no longer be called George Schmidt, but "George von Triller,"* for you have a much nobler heart than many who descend from a noble ancestry.'

All rejoiced when they heard of the honest charcoal-burner's reward. Henceforth he was called, as the Elector had commanded, George von Triller. He received a fine estate in the neighbourhood of Freiberg, so that he became a rich knight, and no longer had to burn charcoal in the sweat of his brow.

Such is the story of the robbery of the Saxon princes. The family Von Triller flourished for centuries, and has only died out in our days. Both princes, Ernest and Albert, grew up to be the joy of

* Von in German is a title of nobility, and Trillern signifies to shake.

their parents. Nine years after, in 1464, the Elector Frederick died; then the two brothers for twenty-one years reigned together over the Saxon dominion. In 1485 they divided the land. From this division arose the two lines in the Saxon house, one of which, the Albertine, now reigns in the kingdom of Saxony; the other, the Ernestine, in the various Saxon duchies.

THE DOG'S REVENGE.

A TRUE STORY.

WILL had been bragging. That's the way the trouble began; and that's the way a good deal of trouble begins, among big people as well as among little ones.

Ned Willis had a dog, a little fellow named Spot; and he had been showing his tricks to Will that day. In an unlucky moment Will began to brag about his brother's dog, Max.

Ned did not believe that a big dog could be so funny as a little one. Then Will waxed warm, and told stories bigger than ever. But Ned laughed at his boasting, and taunted Will to such a pitch that he told him he would go over to his brother's and get Max if he would wait; so Ned threw himself on the grass and played with Spot, while Will went after Max. In a few minutes he returned, followed by a large black Newfoundland dog.

Now what ailed Max that day I can't imagine. Whether it was too warm, or he thought it undignified to perform before a small dog, though he often went through all his tricks for Will—played 'dead dog,' shook hands, or held a piece of meat on his nose,—not a thing would he do that day. He just stood there and wagged his tail, and looked at Will. All the commands, shouts, and coaxings, had no more effect on him than on the grass he stood on.

Ned began to laugh, and say, 'I told you so!' and vexed Will, till his angry passions rose to a fearful height. He seized a stick which he had tried to make Max jump over, and holding the dog's collar in one hand, he gave him several hard blows. Max finally jerked away, and ran yelping home, and Will sat down on the grass to cool, feeling very hot and angry.

Will thought that was the end of it; but not so Max. In his doggish soul his wrongs rankled, and a chance soon came for him to punish his enemy.

Later in the day Will went up to his brother's house for milk. The family happened to be all away, but that made no difference; for they always left the pail standing on the kitchen table, all ready, and Max was too good a watch-dog to allow any stranger to come in.

As usual, Will walked into the house, took up the pail and turned to go. But a growl arrested him. He looked round. There stood Max, his white teeth uncovered, his tail hanging down, his whole attitude meaning serious business.

'Poor dog!' said Will, and stooped to pat him, though rather nervously; for he well knew Max could be very fierce.

At this moment the dog gave a fiercer growl, and Will hastily drew back.

'Poor doggy! poor Max! good fellow!' said Will, in his most coaxing tone. But Max growled, his

eyes looking red and wicked, and Will knew that if he moved he would fly at him.

'Well, I may as well wait till some of them come in,' said Will to himself, and turned to sit down. Max flew at his foot, and held his head there with an ominous growl. Will dared not move.

'I'll put this pail down anyway,' was his next thought. But Max next resented the movement of his hand as well as his foot, and made Will understand that he must stand on that spot and hold the pail till the family came.

Here was a fix! Mary waiting at home for the milk to put in her custard, Ned Willis waiting in the back-yard for him to go swimming, and both of them knowing that he had only run up for the milk!

How Ned would tease him! How Mary would laugh at him!

Again he made a movement to go. Max was ready for him, and this time seized his foot.

Will tried to coax him, and he let go, but stood ready for another move.

'Where are all the family?' was his next thought. Then he remembered that his brother was at the office, and would not come home till six o'clock; his brother's wife had gone to town shopping with his sister; and the girl had gone home for a week. He looked at the clock. It was four o'clock—two hours before he could hope for release! He heard Ned call him. The calls came nearer. He was coming after him! He would catch him in this plight! How Will's face flushed as he thought of that! If he could only lock the door and put down the curtains! But Max was alert; he dare not move. The calls came nearer, and at last Ned's mocking face looked in at the open window.

'Why don't you come along?' was his question.

'I can't—I don't want to,' he stammered. Max growled, and Ned saw how it was.

'Oh, oh! the dog won't let you! He remembers old scores! Why don't you sit down, if you will stay? Aren't you tired of holding that pail?'

'If you don't shut up I'll pitch this pail of milk at you,' said Will at last, savagely.

Ned saw it was time to stop, so he turned away, calling as he went,—

'I heard Mary inquiring for you. I'll stop and let her know you've got a pressing engagement.'

Well, he did, of course; and as he went through the village he told every boy he met; and one by one they crept up and peeped through the window at the unfortunate prisoner, each one saying his smart thing at Will's expense.

Poor Will! It was rather hard. He had threatened to fight every boy in the town, and every muscle ached like the toothache before his brother's wife came in and found him.

With difficulty she got the dog off, and Will had to confess to the beating.

He dragged his weary bones home, found Mary in a towering passion, no custards for tea, and a lecture from his father on cruelty to animals.

The boys didn't forget it either, and it made life a burden to him for weeks. As for Max, he did not offer to touch him again; but he never forgave him, and he met all his advances with a growl.—*New York Independent.*



The Elector thanking the Charcoal-burner.

[Page 270.]

Chatterbox.

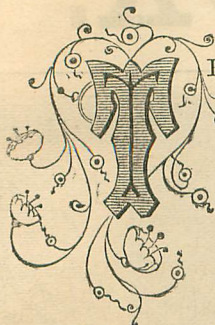


Cyril falling through the Ice into the water.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 267.)

CHAPTER VI.



THINGS looked brighter next day—little Prue had slept well, and suffered no return of the fits; Dr. Ferrars had visited her early, and given a good report; and the sun shone.

The four elder children met early in the great hall with their books and pens, and for the first time since their arrival at Northholme

a real effort was made to vanquish their several holiday tasks. Then Greta remembered that it was the day for writing home; and who was to do it?

'Not I,' said Cyril; 'my turn came last week.'

'And I wrote the week before,' declared Greta.

'And I put a postscript in,' muttered Bob.

'Oh, Bob, only about your skates!' exclaimed his sister; 'that can't count for a letter.'

Poor Bob! he looked and felt very uncomfortable; whoever wrote this time must needs give the account of yesterday's misfortunes, and it was hard that this should fall upon him—the most guilty one.

Cyril left the room, and Greta protested, 'But it is your turn, Bob.'

None of these young people were fond of letter-writing, unless it might be Cyril—when he chose.

Marcia was deep in her Indian letter, smiling over her gleanings from Mrs. Mack of her dear mother when a little girl. The discussion roused her, however, and Bob's painful situation touched her.

'Let me write, Greta,' she asked pleasantly; 'if you think Aunt Margaret will like it as well.'

Greta had no doubt of this; and Bob, as he strolled out of the room and saw the precious Indian letter put aside, whispered that 'Marcia was a brick,' which made the little girl's eyes glisten with pleasure.

Marcia wrote a very straightforward, sensible account of the accident, which Greta read and approved, and then came a delightful break in the day's routine. Mr. Percival, the clergyman of Northholme, rang the great bell at the door, and asked if any of the young people would like to drive in his waggonette to the skating in the meadows, some miles distant?

Skating! The children had anxiously looked for this; but the ice on the ponds in the immediate neighbourhood was not yet pronounced safe, so the idea of the flooded meadows, where there was no depth of water to cause alarm, was delightful.

But little Prue! ought they to forget her?

Rachel settled that for them. She came down to answer Mr. Percival's questions about the little girl, and thanked him for offering to take care of the rest. 'The quieter the house could be kept the better,' she said.

Then wraps were collected, lunch was packed in a basket, and Greta and Marcia were tucked into the far corner of the waggonette with Louie Percival, Mr. Percival's little girl, just home from school. Bob sat

on the box, and not till he had mounted was Cyril discovered to be missing; he had been seen on the highroad just before by the keeper's boy.

'Where can he be gone?' Greta exclaimed, impatiently.

The keeper's boy thought he was with young Mr. Morley; and Mr. Percival, suggesting that he could ride after them on the pony when he returned, they started on their expedition.

Marcia was nearly as wild as Greta when she reached the meadows. Never had her eyes gazed on so pretty a scene. White snow, blue sky, bright sunshine, and a wide glassy space, over which glided not only sturdy men and straggling-limbed boys, but pretty fur-clad ladies and little scarlet-hooded girls.

Greta and Bob had their skates on in no time, and Bob had already taken one exciting skurry across the ice when he returned in hot haste to apologise to his cousin for his desertion.

'I'll push you in a chair, Marcia, in a moment,' he exclaimed, 'only let me have one race with Greta.'

But Marcia was smiling over her first efforts in a pair of real skates provided by Louie Percival.

'Don't mind me a bit, Bob,' she declared; 'see, I am beginning to learn by myself—or at least Louie tells me how to stand.'

Marcia had no lack of teachers; Mr. Percival, Louie, Greta, and a dozen strange boys, volunteered advice and help, and even lunch could hardly tear her from the delightful ice-paradise.

'Confess England is better than India,' shouted Bob, bearing down on the small cousin, and whirling round when within an inch of upsetting her.

But Marcia shook her head, though her eyes danced with pleasure.

'Not better,' she said; 'but very nice: if only father and Dick were here!'

'And where can that donkey Cyril be?' asked Bob, not very politely.

Ah! where indeed? Cyril had gone out after his lesson, resolved to amend his ways in several matters that would not, he knew, be in strict accordance with his father's and mother's wishes. Little Prue's accident had made him think and wish, somehow, that he could be more straightforward, more like—well, even Greta or Bob—Marcia he looked upon as much beyond his powers of imitation. 'She was really good,' he said aloud; but Bob and Greta often sinned and repented, and felt gay and glad after that till their next slip, whereas Cyril generally had some troublesome secret to carry about with him, which worried him in the day and gave him bad dreams at night. Such an one he now resolved to dispose of summarily, and with this view he looked up the book he had borrowed of young Morley, and determined to send it back with a note declining a proffered partnership in a poultry-yard which his new friend was forming at the Beeches.

After a short deliberation with himself on the subject, Cyril settled that writing would hardly do; he had better go to the Beeches, see young Morley, and refuse to have anything to do with the matter. Something within him suggested that he had better not throw himself into the way of his undesirable friend; but something else in Cyril replied that

he hoped he had common sense enough to be able to speak to a young fellow without being led astray by him. So, book in hand, he started for the Beeches, found young Morley at home, and received at once a pleasant greeting and invitation to lunch.

'And, after lunch, we'll take a turn on the shrubbery pond,' said young Morley.

'I'm afraid that won't do,' said Cyril; 'my skates are at home.'

'Suit yourself in the gun-room,' said young Morley, lightly; 'I have half-a-dozen pairs at your service.'

'But what about the ice?' questioned Cyril. 'I doubt if that is really bearing.'

'Oh, if that is your objection,' returned his friend, 'I'll send one of the farm men to try it first; but I thought you had more pluck.'

It is grievous at twelve years old to be accused of want of pluck, especially by an elder of fifteen. Cyril coloured, but controlling himself said coolly,—

'I'm not much afraid of anything, Morley, as you know; but —'

'But you think discretion the better part of valour. All right, old chap; a ducking at Christmas time is a thing to be avoided,' said his friend, 'so we'll have Hodge and a heavy stone or two.'

Against his own better judgment, Cyril suffered himself to be persuaded to stay lunch, and then to join his friend in skating on the pond in the park after one of the labourers had tested the ice.

'I am sure father would say we had taken every precaution,' said Cyril to himself, as the exciting exercise deadened within him the pricks of conscience. 'If only Bob were here, how he would enjoy it!'

But Bob was far away, just as happily engaged in the body, and less troubled in spirit, than his brother. For do what he would, Cyril could not quite forget that he was skating on the Beeches pond with young Morley, an acquaintance he specially would have been wished to avoid, since the lad had an ugly character in the neighbourhood, having been dismissed from two schools already, and worn out the patience of three tutors.

Cyril had set out in the morning, too, determined to put an end to anything beyond ordinary civility; how had he been so strangely led in an opposite direction? He was trying to unravel this problem, and at the same time swinging along at full speed on a pair of well-fitting skates, when a cry from behind startled him.

Could anything have happened to young Morley? No; Cyril glanced over his shoulder as he tried to stop himself, and saw his friend practising his 'inside edge' near the bank; but between him and Morley a farmer was advancing with gestures and cries of alarm. Cyril saw him, and also, in the same instant, saw and felt his own danger; he had reached a spot where the ice was broken for the waterfowl, but he could not stop himself, and in a second he was overhead in the freezing water.

A rush of agonizing thought, and then all was a blank.

A blank till he woke to a feeling of distress and confusion in the warm kitchen at the Beeches. Many people thronged round him as he lay wrapped up in blankets before the fire, and there was talk of putting him to bed and sending a message to Northholme

Manor House; but Cyril, as soon as he could understand anything, earnestly begged for clothes, and to be allowed to go home, as he was perfectly well. His tone was so decided and imploring that he got his way, and clad in a much-too-large suit of his friend's, and wrapped in heavy rugs, he was driven home, or at least close to the gate.

'Put me down here,' he said shortly to the man who drove.

And then he crept quietly in at the great door, and was pleased to find it dusk, and the other children not at home.

He went upstairs and peered into the darkened nursery where Prue lay dozing, faithful Rachel beside her.

'Rachel, I have a headache,' said Cyril; 'I am going to bed, I don't want any tea. Is Prue better?'

And then he scrambled shivering into bed, first taking the precaution to rub his damp hair as nearly dry as possible to avoid detection, and covering young Morley's clothes with a coat of his own.

He was glad that Rachel brought him a large cup of hot tea after a while, though it was all he could do to keep his chattering teeth quiet while he drank it; but, luckily, Rachel was full of Prue's improved symptoms, and did not notice his condition.

(To be continued.)



THE DORMOUSE.

ALL our young readers know well the common mouse, and many have doubtless seen the field mouse; but the dormouse, shown in our picture, is probably known only to a few. The shape of the head and body of this pretty little creature prove that it is some relation of the grey-coated pilferer from our larders, but its somewhat bushy tail shows that it is also akin to the nimble squirrel. Like the squirrel, the dormouse has its home in our woods and thickets; but it is so shy and timid, that we are not likely to see it unless we come upon it during its long winter's sleep, of which we shall have more to say presently.

The dormouse is very small, its body being less than three inches in length, and its tail about two inches and a half. Its colour is light reddish-brown on the upper parts, and nearly white on the under. So rapid is it in its movements that the eye can scarcely follow it, as it runs along the lower branches of the trees, or leaps about among the grass and leaves upon the ground. It feeds upon nuts, acorns, and grain, and, like the squirrel, it often takes its food between its forepaws and sits upright to eat it. A pretty, round nest of grass, with a lining of moss and lichens, is built by the dormouse between the forked branches of a low bush, or within a hollow tree. In this it places a quantity of food, which it busily collects during the autumn. When the cold weather comes it rolls itself into a ball, by curling its tail over its head between its ears, and falls into a deep



Dormice.

sleep. In this state it remains through the greater part of the winter, only waking up now and then when the air is unusually warm, and eating a small quantity from its store of food.

When a dormouse is taken from its nest during this long sleep its body seems as if frozen, and it

may be rolled or tossed about without showing any signs of life; but it soon revives if held in the hand, or gently warmed at the fire.

Creatures which, like the dormouse, pass the winter in a state of sleep or torpor, are called *hybernating* animals.

H. B. A.



THE MUSIC PRIZE.

CHAPTER I.

MY hero is not a gallant warrior like Havelock, nor a brave saviour of the perishing, such as Grace Darling was. He is simply a plain, rough-looking, industrious labouring man. He lived in a village called Clifton-in-the-Reeds. His house stood retired, with a tidy bit of garden near it, and an orchard planted by his father. George Weston did

not keep a carriage, nor had he any carriage-keeping friends, so he needed no coach-road to his cottage. A path was enough to walk upon, and a wheelbarrow was the most important vehicle that ever drove up to the door. Some folk wondered how he liked to sleep in so lonesome a place, and how his sister Rose could spend her long hours there whilst her brother was absent from six to six every day in the week except Sunday. But she had plenty to do, had Rose, what with cleaning and cooking, patching and darning—

for, mind you, she was but fifteen, and the sole manager of George's household. George and Rose were orphans. Their father, once an able labourer and a good man, died of consumption, and in two years after his death his wife drooped and faded away, a victim to the same disease. It was a happy thing that George was reckoned old enough and steady enough to be entrusted by Squire Clifton with the home. An uncle coveted it, and hoped to step in, but George's character was unblemished; so that the Squire resolved on that account, as well as for his father's sake, to retain him as tenant. The 'take' consisted of three acres of grass-land and the cottage. George was now an eligible husband for any young woman of his own years and condition, but at present he was 'fancy-free,' the husband of his sister, dear little Rose; and if folk had any fault to find with George, it was that he was too silent and distant, not inclined to make friends, seldom seen among the idlers at the corner or near the blacksmith's shop; but much engaged in his spare hours on his own premises, where he found plenty to do.

One day he had been opening an old black box, which at his father's death was filled with memorials of him who was gone. His wife, after the funeral, placed the flute and music-books, and some other things which reminded her too much of her dead husband, in the box, and locked it up. The key got lost, and the box remained closed during her lifetime. Often did George eye the box after his mother was gone, and long to open it. The key, however, was not forthcoming, and he did not like to force the lock—that seemed too rough usage for such a sacred treasury. One day, however, Rose found the key. It had by some means got wedged between the floor-boards in a crack. Rose confessed she might have hid it there herself in her childish sports. The box might now be opened lawfully, and therefore that very night George and his sister opened it with melancholy curiosity. The contents of the box consisted entirely of relics belonging to their departed father—such as books, the coat he was married in, old letters, a flute, and some music.

After carefully and reverently inspecting the things, on which a sacred tear or two fell from Rose, George decided to replace everything except the flute and the music-book. It occurred to him that it would be very delightful to walk in his father's steps as a flute-player. The flute was an instrument in which he had taken such pride and pleasure. Its notes had mingled often with the praises offered to God in Clifton Church, in those days when ten or a dozen men could be found able to handle, not unskilfully, some instrument—bassoon, clarionet, violin, or what not. A splendid organ now occupies the place where the old Clifton singers used to perform their elaborate anthems before admiring congregations. We do not disapprove of the change, but we are sorry, too, that the old church choirs are broken up, and few villagers now care to learn any instrument of music.

Ah, that flute! It reminded George of his father, and of hot Sunday afternoons when the church was full, and the band did their best for God and their village church. George could still hear in fancy the soft high notes of the flute sounding distinctly through

the clash of instruments and singers. Let the great bassoon blow as it would, let the violoncello thunder out its deepest notes, let the Hallelujahs of the choir shake the roof, yet, for all that, the small sweet voice of the flute would be heard and felt, as though it represented the love and the pleading of the whole psalm. That dear old flute! How, too, it brought back happy memories of calm summer evenings, when his father would sit on the garden seat and warble forth tender old English, Scottish, and Irish ballad tunes; and where are there any sweeter or fuller of heart, even in Germany or Italy? As he looked at it he could smell the mignonette, he could hear the blackbird singing in rivalry, he could see little Rose just learning to walk, he could see a hundred things he had not seen for years!

'Rose!' said he, after a long pause, and George's pauses were often very long. 'Rose!'

'Well, George, what is it?'

'Why, I think I should like to learn how to play this flute.'

'Well, George, and if I were you I would. It would be a great amusement to you, and I should stich as hard again if you would play me a tune. If music makes the feet go, I do not see why it should not make the fingers go.'

George smiled at his little sister's reasoning, and said if that were the case she might prick her fingers, or mend his clothes so badly that the patches would drop out as he was walking; which would be a great misfortune, and lead to the locking up of the flute again. But on Rose assuring him there was no chance of either accident happening, George took up the flute and began to try. He thought it was very much easier than it really is. It used to seem, in his father's hands, the easiest thing possible. He just placed it to his lip and breathed, and lo, there were the sweetest sounds! But all George could get out of the flute that night was nothing but a deep hollow sort of whisper, at which Rose laughed, and George had to do all he could to keep his temper. He looked, indeed, quite cross. The flute proving so obstinate, he next spent a long hour of silence in studying the book. His brain, when he went to bed, was crowded with a jumbled mass of musical phrases, and he felt, as he laid his head on the pillow, that he had undertaken a very difficult job; but his ambition to be a player would, he thought, be a match for it. Of course he dreamed of nothing else. He thought he was playing a solo in Clifton Church before a great assembly, but his flute would not speak. As often as he breathed into it the strangest sounds came forth. Then, when that difficulty was overcome, he could not find the right place in the music-book, and the people were all waiting for *him*! He could hear some one tittering behind him. But at length the dream grew kinder, the piece was going at a splendid pace, and he found himself awake humming 'Away with Melancholy.'

CHAPTER II.

Two years have passed away, and George's ambition is nearly satisfied. Not only does the once stubborn flute sound as sweetly as in his father's hands, but the mysteries of flats and sharps, tones and semitones, common and triple time, are unlocked, and

George can now be called a musician. His sister and he have resolved to keep the flute-playing a secret until George can perform without being nervous or ashamed. He aspires to take a part some day in the Clifton concerts, which are now a regular annual affair. Lady Selina Clifton, the Squire's wife, is a great musician. No grand concert at the county town escapes her. If a great oratorio is performed at Minsterton she is sure to be there. She cares for nothing in the London season so much as musical gatherings. She is supremely happy when a few chiefs of the art are gathered in her drawing-room in Berkeley Square. She is a good pianist herself, having been at it from an early age. After enjoying the best teachers to be found in England, she travelled on the Continent, and took finishing lessons in Florence and Dresden. Strange-looking foreigners, wild of beard and full of gesture, used to come to Clifton sometimes, when the Squire and his family were at home; and oh, the poor organist of Clifton Church! and oh, the faltering, faint-hearted choir at such seasons of searching trial! The great foreign gentlemen were supposed to sit as judges in the Squire's ample pew, and every little blunder in time or tune was, no doubt, an unpardonable offence to men like Herr Windsheim or Signor Salerno. But, dreadful as the ordeal was, it did the singers good. It taught them there were greater masters of harmony among the living than themselves.

To encourage the native talent for music, Lady Selina on one occasion offered a prize of five pounds to the player of the best solo on any wind or stringed instrument at the yearly concert. This pleasant stimulus revealed so much latent musical power, that her ladyship decreed it should be an annual thing. And now there was young Hawkins, a dashing farmer after hounds, who could make the cornet discourse excellent music: there was Nelson, the publican's son, a not unworthy flautist; there was Bob High, a violin-player who needed not to be ashamed; and several others rising up. We must not forget Will Jones, who, after denouncing the organ as a box of whistles, and the new choir (for the organ upset the old one) as a set of muffs, at length condescended to join as a tenor singer, and kept his clarionet for home use. He, too, was an aspirant for Lady Selina's prize. Dim floating desires after that same golden fruit possessed the mind of our George, as he sat with little Rose in the sixpenny benches, and heard Nelson, High, Hawkins, and Old Will, performing their pieces before the villagers, the gentry at the Hall, and the awful Judge. He wondered how he should feel if he were standing there, the centre of three hundred eyes and ears, acquitting himself or condemning himself to the distinguished foreigner, who, it was said, could play music upside down, and some said two fiddles at once; but that George would not believe. Then there were Lady Selina and the Squire (not that he was much, for he looked so good-natured, and was often asleep till the plaudits came), and a lot of great people from the Hall; but George thought he could stand them all better than the Tom, Dick, and Harry of every-day life: some of them were such quizzing fellows, and all they said was in every one's mouth before the world was a day older!

If a man broke down he would never hear the last

of it. If such a thing were to happen to him, how sorry should he be that Rose ever found the key of the box!

CHAPTER III.

THE great musical event was fixed to take place in Christmas week; and after harvest was over, and potatoes were pried, and the gloom of November settled down on the soppy fields and muddy lanes, the practising began in earnest. Then was the time to behold the conductor, Mr. Murray, seated among his rustic pupils, wielding his fiddle-bow like Agamemnon, tapping impatiently when an unfortunate tenor came to grief, or when a dreadful flatness seized upon a leading treble. The choir was strongest, because safest, in its choruses. If you do make a false note or lose your time among a score of others, you escape detection, and you share in the clapping of hands, the thunder of feet, the rattling of walking-sticks and umbrellas. The solo-players kept much to themselves. Some paid visits under the shroud of evening to Mr. Murray's house, and took advantage of his criticisms; others, among whom was George, worked at their task alone. George had selected a tune from his father's book which he thought sweet and full of tenderness. 'The last Rose of Summer' is indeed a general favourite, especially when it is in the hands of one who can do it justice. George's mind, pensive naturally, chimed in with the air, which is a sort of elegy breathed over the dry dead leaves once so full of life and glory. George and Rose had much talk about the choice of a tune, and many times were the fluttering leaves of the old tune-book turned over and over, but they always ended by his saying, 'I like "The last Rose of Summer" best,' and by her answering him, 'So do I.'

(Concluded in our next.)

WORTHY OF A KING.

BEFORE the erection of a light-house on the spot, many were the goodly vessels that struck and foundered on the dangerous Eddystone rocks in the English Channel. Our present lighthouse, in all its strength, was not the work of a few months, and previous to its construction two other buildings had risen on the reef, in vain attempt to defy the waves of ocean. One of those towers was laid low by wind and tide, the other was destroyed by fire.

It was during the erection of this last that an incident occurred which one of our greatest engineers has deemed worthy of remembrance. Says Smeaton in his *Narrative*:—

'There being war at the time between England and France, a French privateer took the opportunity of one day seizing the men employed upon the rock, and carrying them off prisoners to France. But the capture coming to the ears of the King (Louis XIV.) he immediately ordered that the prisoners should be released, and sent back to their work with presents, declaring that though he was at war with England he was not at war with mankind; and, moreover, that the Eddystone lighthouse was so situated as to be of equal service to all nations whose ships had occasion to pass through the Channel that divided France from England.'

H.A.F.



The men employed on the rock carried off prisoners.

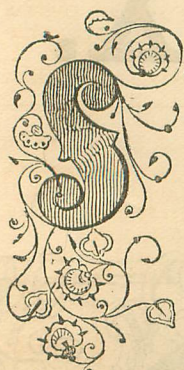
Chatterbox.



George practising for the Music Prize.

THE MUSIC PRIZE.

(Concluded from page 279.)



O, 'The last Rose of Summer' it was to be. This important point being decided, and George's application (under the seal of secrecy) having been sent in and sanctioned, he made himself thoroughly master of the tune. And not only so, but he got a copy of the words and made himself master of them likewise. Often the strain might be heard far into night. The rough-looking minstrel, flute at lip and book before him, stuck to his work with unflagging zeal, whilst a flaring candle, stuck in a pint bottle, guttered down beside him, for George's practising-room was old and draughty. People who looked through a crack might have smiled at the sight, but they would have admired the beauty of the strains which the heavy-browed flute-player contrived to draw out of his old instrument.

CHAPTER IV.

THE doors are opened, and the happy folk are flocking in. A crimson rope divides the room. On this side you can hear the concert for sixpence—on that side you can hear it for a shilling. About twenty of the best seats, duly marked with rosettes, are strictly reserved for the party from the great house, and much speculation is rife as to the exact chair which will sustain the somewhat bulky form of the great Herr Windsheim whilst he holds the balances of judgment. The singers gathered in the classroom, in their very tip-top array. Much surprise greeted the appearance of George, mingled in certain bosoms with some scorn and contempt. It was known that his father had been a flute-player, but no one suspected George of a leaning in that direction.

'What can he have come here for?' said Hawkins to Nelson. 'I hope he will not put his foot in it. He looks likely enough.'

'I trust not,' replied Nelson; 'he looks as if his flute would do nothing but bellow.' And so the whisperers went on.

Poor George soon felt he was the object of jealousy; and he fancied every one was talking about him, and making themselves merry at his expense. He felt very hot and uncomfortable, until a young woman came kindly forward and said, 'Oh, Mr. George Weston, are you going to try for the prize? I have never heard you could play.' George stood on one leg and then on the other, and blushing avowed his very great fondness for music, and his intention to try for the prize.

'Well,' said Mary, 'my father and your father belonged to the old church choir, and I wish you may succeed.'

She gave George so sweet a smile as she said this, that the poor man fell over head and ears in love. Not that he admired Mary for the first time that night. Her taste for singing little plaintive Scottish ballads, her simple mode of dressing, her kind, good-

natured face, and the old friendship between their fathers, had drawn him to her.

The room is now crowded—every seat is filled, except the aristocratic chairs with cherry-coloured rosettes; and now a general clapping of hands and grating of feet announce the approach of the great people. The Herr does not look so very dreadful—but he may be a dragon of Wantley for all that. After a brief pause a rattling piece on the pianoforte is announced, and performed. Then comes a glee—a duet—a solo—and so forth, according to printed programme. The Herr has been watched, as a mouse is watched by a cat. A false move in time or tune evokes a shrug or a slight twitch of the eyebrow. Verily the Herr is alive to everything. Mr. Murray does his part admirably. A frigid, bony Scotchman, with iron nerves and abundance of self-confidence, he fears no Herrs—not he! He simply does his duty, as any one of the 'Black Watch' did in Ashantee. He cares no more for the shrugs of the Herr than his countrymen cared for the black men's slugs. His coolness and calmness saved the fortunes of his little host. When the two Miss Bobbinets sang their duet—'O ye voices gone,' they were almost ruined by fear of the Herr; but Murray's firm face and the tones of his whisper cheered them, and they sang beautifully, inasmuch that the Judge condescended to say something which sounded like 'Hoch!' and clapped lightly his gloved hands.

After the programme was duly and creditably performed the solo-players stood forth, one by one, as competitors for the prize. Hawkins played 'The Standard Bearer' faultlessly as to the notes, but there was no display of light and shade. It was all *fortissimo*. The violinist had been a little too ambitious, and his skill barely carried him through his most difficult passages. The Squire, though broad awake, did not perceive the tripping of the bow, and applauded with his hearty English 'Bravo!' but the Herr made a note of Bob High's transgressions. Old Will Jones essayed a solo of ancient date, full of quaint windings and obsolete flourishes; but, alas for him! at one interesting moment the venerable clarinet refused to speak. Will was not put out in the least, but began again. The note, however, would not be born, and poor Will had to retire in chagrin and confusion. The Herr even condescended to smile. Nelson next came to the front, flute in hand. His execution was very good, and his piece carefully played. Indeed, nothing so good had been heard, and little Rose trembled in her sixpenny seat for her brother's success. 'Dear George, the Lord help him!' she whispered. 'I hope it's not wrong to pray for him.' Nelson brought his piece to an admirable finish, and a buzz went round the room—'He'll have it!' 'I should like to see any one beat that!' 'If I were George I would not try after that!' But George proceeded, in spite of Nelson's brilliant success, to stand in the place assigned. He wondered at himself that he was so cool. Not even Murray himself was cooler. He seemed to see nobody—to hear nothing. He was in his own room, with only Rose by his side. He had his father's honour to sustain, he had to do no discredit to the flute. Breathing one word for help, he began 'The last Rose of Summer.' In execution he was behind Nel-

son, but in expression he surpassed him altogether. Nelson, in fact, had no strong feelings, nor was his mind in harmony with his piece. He did it very well, but it wanted heart; and, in spite of its sparkle, it did not touch the hearts of the hearers. On the contrary, George's soul went into his flute. He made it speak. Forgetting all about the prize, caring neither for Squire, nor Herr, nor grand ladies, nor neighbours, he made his flute tell its pathetic story. Eyes unused to tears were moistened, and when he had ended there was an unusual silence, as if people felt it was not right to applaud noisily after so sweet and touching a strain; but in a moment or two there was a thunder of applause, and loud cries of 'Encore! Play it again!' Lady Selina whispered something to Herr Windsheim, and he nodded his head, as though he agreed with her ladyship entirely.

Silence having been restored, the Squire arose and said he hoped the young flute-player, whose father had often played in Clifton Church, would oblige them with the piece again; but George was suddenly taken faint, and Mr. Murray assured the Squire he did not feel well enough to do so.

Thereupon the Herr arose amid the deepest silence. In broken but intelligible English he thanked the singers for their interesting concert. He pointed out, he hoped without offence, certain blemishes which might easily be amended and avoided; he congratulated Mr. Murray on his ability as a conductor, and Lady Selina and the Squire on the progress village music was making in England; and, finally, he proceeded to pass judgment on the competitors for the prize. The palm was awarded to George; not because he was the most finished player, but because his music had a living soul, and spoke to the soul.

'I have seldom,' said Herr Windsheim, 'felt the power of music so much. I have never understood, till to-night, the charm of your island melodies. I am requested, sir,' said he, addressing George, 'to give you this purse with five golden sovereigns in it, and I may say I think it is well deserved; and if you will spend time in gaining a greater freedom of execution, you will be no mean artist but a credit to any musical society.'

Poor George's white cheeks had now regained more than their usual colour, and in a few simple words he thanked the Herr, the Squire, and her Ladyship, and sat down again. The audience now broke up and retired to their homes. Congratulations, some real and some hollow, flowed in upon George, but the one most prized was that which came from Mary's lips, and which was accompanied by a smile that made him more in love with her than ever.

G. S. O.

MEDUSÆ.

IT is not possible for a pencil drawing to give an idea of the beautiful creatures which inhabit the sea; and this is specially true of the Medusæ, or, as they are commonly called, 'Jelly-fish,' for the chief characteristics of this marine group are their delicate transparency and their exquisite colouring. In shape they vary much; some of the family resembling mushrooms, or umbrellas, as they float on the waves,

and others are more like crystal balls, bells, or flowers. So fragile and delicate-looking are some of the Medusæ, that it is marvellous how they can withstand the buffeting of the waves and the winds. If touched when swimming they quickly contract, draw up their floating tentacles, and sink down into the sea out of danger.

In some parts of the world Medusæ grow to an enormous size; I have read of a specimen seen on the shore near Bombay, which weighed several tons! This gigantic creature began to putrefy in three days, and some fishermen were engaged to watch its decomposition and to collect its remains; but, strange to say, although it required nine months for its complete dissolution, 'not a trace of bones or cartilages rewarded the patience of the watchers.'

I have no doubt some of my readers have seen Medusæ lying on the shore in a quivering, shapeless mass, disagreeable alike to the eye and to the touch. And if they, like the Bombay fishermen, watched the melting away of the poor 'Jelly-fish' in the hot sun, they would find, in the course of a few hours, that nothing was left of the once beautiful creature whose tints were as varied as those of the rainbow.

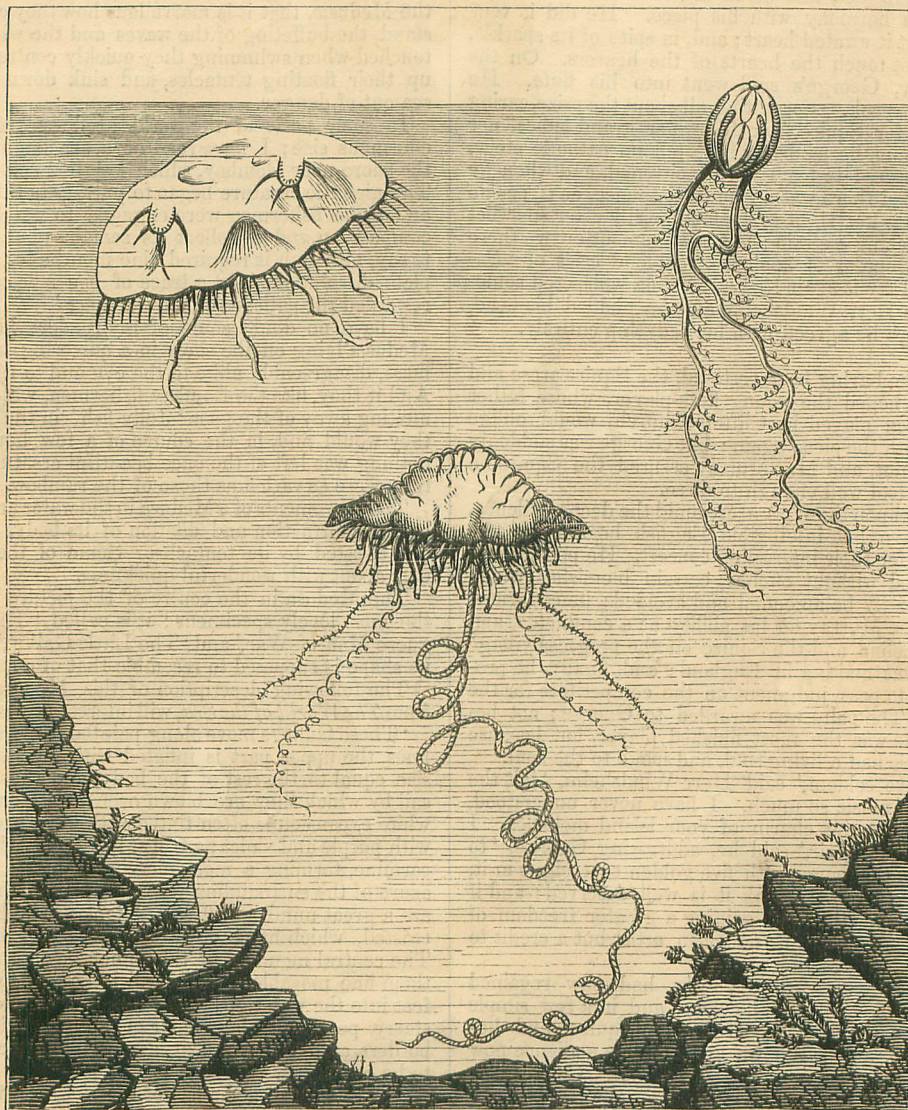
The movements of a Medusa in the water are caused by the contraction and dilation of its body, and it is also assisted by its tentacles. Some of the species dart about with wonderful quickness.

The Medusa in the centre of the picture is one of the most lovely specimens; it is called 'The Portuguese Man-of-War,' and 'The Little Galley,' because its shape is supposed to resemble that of a ship's hull.

The following description of this Medusa, copied from *The World of the Sea*, will interest my readers:—

'These Galleys move along painted with the richest hues, the upper part is inflated with air, often to a size equal to the rest of the body, and thus forms a sail by which they are blown over the waters. This white expansion is often tinted with blue, and shaded with purple and violet; a frill at its ridge is of a bright carmine, forming a most pleasing contrast with the azure of the surrounding water. Beneath the vessel are a great number of fleshy tentacles, cylindrical and twisted, which hang down like tassels of blue silk. The central members of this bunch have attached to them fine movable threads, which hang down many feet into the water. These threads are studded with starry pearls of the colour of indigo, which form borders, and spirals, and zigzags of an elegance hardly to be conceived.'

The Medusa on the left of the picture is the most common of the tribe, and the one so often washed up on our shores by the tide. It is white, with a few crimson rings and streaks. The specimen on the right hand is a Beroë, a lovely little creature, like a globe of pure crystal; its tentacles are long and graceful, and are ornamented with numerous slender threads or fibres, with which the Beroë catches its prey. It moves rapidly along by means of eight longitudinal bands fixed to its body; these bands are furnished with tiny plates, and we are told that 'they are used like the paddles of a steamer, the little animal beating the water with them in rapid and regular succession, their minute subdivision causing the rays of light, especially when in the sun, to play along those bands with the most brilliant prismatic colours, whilst their



Medusæ.

vigorous strokes cause the globe to shoot hither and thither through the water with remarkable power.

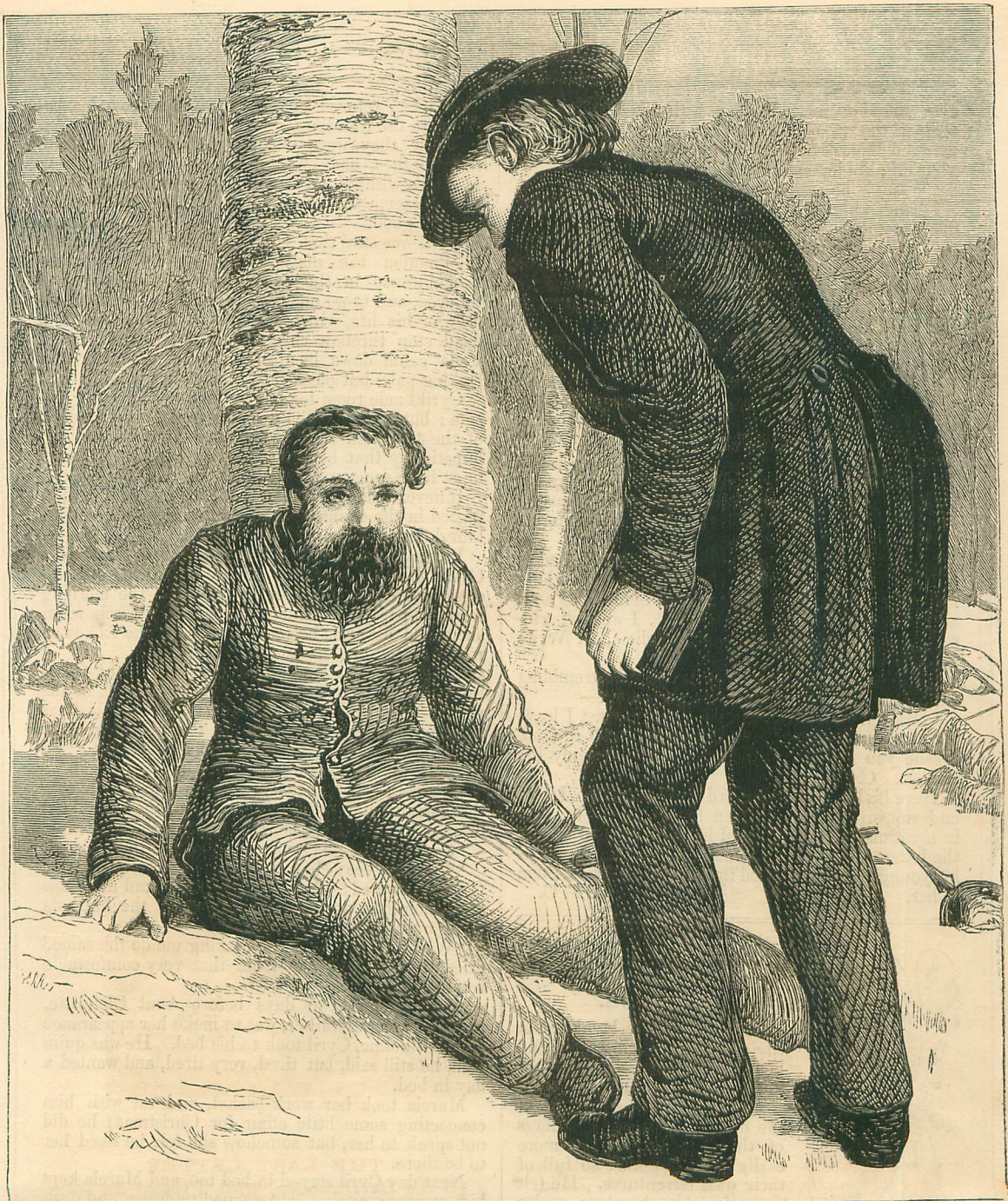
This lovely little Medusa is not rare, but may be seen during the summer and autumn floating along the sea on most of our coasts; it can be easily captured in a net, but it will not live long in captivity, and when dead it quickly melts away.

But although the outward appearance of the Medusæ is so exquisitely beautiful and graceful, they have one characteristic which is by no means pleasing, and about this I will write in a future paper.

ANNA C. WHEELLEY.

THE LAST LETTER.

ON the 1st December, 1870, I visited the battle-field of Valenton. On the previous day the fight had raged, and all its horrors were now to be seen here to their fullest and most fearful extent. It was a bitterly cold morning. In a summer-house, French and Prussians were lying closely side by side on bloody straw, their wounds only partially bound up, and the men sobbing, shrieking, or imploring for a cool drink to their parched tongues. Their limbs were stiff with cold; but fever burned in their blood. A few were still; they had struggled for the last time



and all was over : their faces had been covered with sacks, handkerchiefs, or paper ; they had not had time to bury them yet, because the wounded first demanded every one's attention. The battle-field was frozen hard, and the sun glittered on the white, here and there, blood-stained snow ; it sparkled, too, on the frozen pools of blood, and shone on the helmets, swords, bayonets, and flasks of the dead soldiers lying everywhere around.

In the first portion of the wood at Valenton mostly Prussian corpses lay ; then, in closer ranks, the dead Frenchmen. The wounded were everywhere being taken up. Suddenly a low sob fell upon my ear. Close to the trunk of a silver-beech I found a soldier, who was still alive. He belonged to the 12th Prussian infantry regiment. He was a fine, strong figure, with a large beard : his face, though disfigured by suffering, was still handsome ; his glassy

eyes stared at me. He lay with his back resting against the tree, whither he had with difficulty dragged himself; his hands were convulsively digging into the icy-cold earth.

'Water!' he groaned as I approached him.

I handed him my flask, and he drank eagerly. This did him good.

'Thanks,' he murmured.

I wanted to get the unfortunate man in a better position, and looked round for the bearers of the wounded. He made a sign to me. Each movement increased his torture.

'Leave me,' he said, faint and exhausted. 'It is all over with me.'

'Where are you wounded?'

'I have six bullets through the lower part of my body.'

'Have you any particular wish?'

'Yes.'

He wearily raised up his head, and I saw, by the momentary brightening of his eyes, that his departing spirit was putting forth its last strength. His thoughts were travelling homewards.

'I had just been married a week when I had to go,' he said, slowly. 'I am from Berlin. I had long worked hard to get a good position in life, and now, as I had at last just succeeded . . . I was superintendent in . . . factory . . . I must die. . . . Write for me, please.'

He dictated to me, and, with my hands trembling with the cold, I wrote down his last words:—

'DEAR WIFE,—I must die! So soon must I leave you! Console yourself, and resign yourself to God. I send you my last greetings; greet, too, my old mother. On . . .'

Here his head sank forward on his breast. I held and supported him. After a few moments he died in my arms. The address of his wife I found among the letters in his knapsack, as well as the portrait of his young bride. I packed them all up and sent them to her. J. F. C.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 275.)

CHAPTER VII.



CYRIL came down to breakfast in the morning, looking pale and heavy-eyed, but seemingly not much the worse for his wetting.

He parried the questions of the others regarding his doings of the day before, the more easily that they were so full of their own adventures. He felt uncomfortable, however, under Marcia's innocent gaze, as she pitied the headache which he still owned to.

How unfortunate that the very attempt he had made to sweep away all secrecy and wrong-doing should have led to a fresh complication!

It could do no good, however, to confess his troubles to the rest, Cyril argued, so he kept his own counsel, and, only to the surprise of his brother

and Greta, refused to join them in a second expedition to the meadows.

While they were out his clothes arrived from the Beeches, and Cyril managed to return young Morley's without any one being aware of the transaction except the keeper's boy, so his secret seemed safe for good.

Cyril was sure that young Morley was not likely to mention the matter to Bob, his only other acquaintance in the house, and he began to feel relieved, and to go on with his plans for the remodeling of his life, which seemed to have come to a dead stop through this untoward incident. Little Prue came down in the course of the afternoon looking pale, but pleased to resume her public life.

Cyril made room for her by him on the great hall sofa; but when Rachel declared he looked the worst of the two, and asked what ailed him, he declared impatiently that he was perfectly well, only Rachel must have some one to coddle.

It never struck him then that here was another link forged in the chain of falsehood which was binding him down to the sorry life he had led of late.

For many days no one could guess what ailed Cyril; he was by turns moody and silent, quarrelsome and captious; he refused to join the morning working party, and was even cross to Marcia when she asked him was he really well when he looked so white, and ate no dinner?

Christmas was coming, and so was Aunt Charlotte, but Cyril refused to take any interest in the young fir which Bob had chosen for the Christmas tree, or the expedition to the neighbouring town which had been promised to the children to buy choice toys and treasures for the same.

Bob and Greta held puzzled conversations over the extraordinary state of affairs, but they could not draw any comfortable conclusion from them.

'Cyril always was a queer chap,' said Bob.

'Queer—yes; but a busy sort of queerness,' Greta answered; 'fussing over beetles and museums and such-like, not sitting all day on the hall sofa doing nothing.'

'Well, Greta, it's no use making me do the same,' cried Bob, jumping up from that very comfortable retreat, and shaking himself.

At last, just two days before Aunt Charlotte, released by grandfather, was to make her appearance at Northholme, Cyril took to his bed. He was quite well, he still said, but tired, very tired, and wanted a day in bed.

Marcia took her work-basket, and sat with him concocting some little affair for Christmas; he did not speak to her, but somehow she felt he liked her to be there.

Next day Cyril stayed in bed too, and Marcia kept him company again. He seemed to dream and doze all day, but at dusk he called to his cousin, and asked her very abruptly,—

'Was it wicked to keep a secret—your very own secret, mind?'

'What sort of secret?' asked Marcia, puzzled.

'Something you have done,' said Cyril.

'Something not quite right?' guessed Marcia.

Cyril nodded. 'But nothing that hurts other people.'

'I should tell my mother,' said Marcia; 'it would make me happier.'

'Ah, that is different!' said Cyril, turning over and sighing; 'mine wouldn't understand, if she was here.'

'Then tell God,' whispered Marcia, softly; 'I do, now I have no mother.'

'And does it do the same?' asked Cyril.

'I think so—I hope so,' said Marcia, considering. 'You know He does listen, though He does not always speak back quickly like mother.'

'Marcia,' said Cyril, eagerly, 'come close; I would like to tell you first, and then you can settle about telling—other people. I think I am going to be ill.'

'But that is not wrong,' said Marcia, perplexed.

'No; but wait, there is more, only I am puzzled, and my head aches.'

'Then, don't tell to-night; say your prayers and go to sleep,' advised Marcia; 'or shall I say them for you, if mine will do?'

'Yes; say yours,' said poor Cyril, really exhausted; 'and come directly after breakfast to me to-morrow, Marcia; I really want to tell some one, and God seems too far off.'

Ah, yes, poor Cyril, no wonder He is far off to you, for you have neglected Him sadly of late, and broken all His laws!

There were strange noises in the Northholme Manor House that winter's night. The kitchen-maid going to bed latest of all, met a ghost in the passage, and, screaming, ran to summon Mrs. Mack and the other maids. Mrs. Mack was not lacking in courage, though a stout and somewhat short-breathed old lady. She sternly rebuked Kitty for her folly, declared her ghost a fancy, and set out on a journey of inquiry with a large, flat candlestick and the bedroom poker. Encouraged by this example the housemaid followed her, Kitty not daring to be left behind alone, shivering in the rear.

'It was a ghost,' persisted she. 'I'm telling gospel truth, Mrs. Mack—all in white, with a white face and goggling eyes.'

There was certainly a noise of some sort to be heard as they approached the great hall, and Mrs. Mack seriously began to consider the chances of burglars. She had heard of such people dressing as ghosts to frighten a houseful of women, and get off clear with their booty.

But the plate-chest was safe, she had seen to that; and the few forks and spoons in daily use safely under her bed upstairs.

So she pushed on, panting but undaunted.

The noise grew plainer; some one was tampering with the lock of the hall-door.

Another second, and Mrs. Mack's candle flared on a white figure, with pale face and staring eyes, standing by the great door. She paused an instant, while the other maids gasped in agony, and shut their eyes tight; then she set the candle down on the table, and walked straight up to the phantom, saying, in her softest voice,—

'Come you to bed, there's a deary, and old Mack will tuck you up.'

At this extraordinary speech to a ghost the maids opened their eyes, and beheld Master Cyril!

Cyril indeed, sleep-walking, carrying on his arm

a bundle of clothes, and fumbling helplessly with the key of the great door.

'He must have them back,' was his muttered reply to the old woman's words.

'Ay, sure,' retorted Mrs. Mack; then, turning to the maids, 'Run, you girls, and fill the hot-water tin. The child feels like death. He is so cold.'

Warming a ghost was much more in Kitty's way than confronting one alone, and very soon Cyril was tucked in bed with a hot bottle, and an extra supply of blankets.

Whether he was properly awake yet no one knew, for he still muttered, and stared, and gabbled hastily something about 'taking those clothes back.'

Cyril, as a little child, had once walked in his sleep, and Mrs. Mack was quite equal to the treatment of a somnambulist.

But this time he seemed difficult to quiet, and the kind old servant dared not leave him. She watched him toss, and mutter, and start, for a couple of hours, and then she roused Rachel, and between them they settled that Dr. Ferrars must be sent for, as Cyril was certainly ill; or, as Mrs. Mack expressed it, 'going in for something.'

Aunt Charlotte had again put off her journey; but when she really did arrive late, in the evening of the following day, she found her nephews and nieces looking frightened and unhappy, while Dr. Ferrars was upstairs with Cyril, who lay in bed quite delirious, and in much pain.

'Rheumatic fever affecting the brain,' the doctor pronounced it.

That explanation to Marcia had never come off; and in answer to questions, the children could only protest that they knew no cause for Cyril's illness, though he had seemed dull and uncomfortable for some days past.

Aunt Charlotte was now installed as sick nurse; and for a fortnight Cyril wavered between death and life.

There was no talk of Christmas-trees or shopping-expeditions now. With all their bickerings and fault-findings, the young Tredthorpes dearly loved each other, and Bob and Greta felt remorseful over their late crossness at what they thought a bout of bad temper on Cyril's part.

Bob's one comfort was to be sent out in the worst weather to fetch remedies from the neighbouring town, and he was grateful to Aunt Charlotte when she let him attempt sitting up with Cyril the first half of one night, she, of course, being close at hand.

The invalid being rather less restless than usual, the calm had such an effect on Bob that he too fell asleep, and so ended his first essay at sick nursing.

Aunt Charlotte would not permit the other children to be much with Cyril. She remembered that this was their holiday time, and sent them out riding, walking, or skating, as the case might be; but when the sick boy came to himself, he so plaintively whispered Marcia's name, that it was impossible to deny him the society of his little cousin, though he seemed content with simply looking at her when she did come.

(To be continued.)





Mrs. Mack discovering the Ghost.

Chatterbox.



Faithful Bronze. By HARRISON WEIR.



FAITHFUL BRONZE.

THE noontide was warm, and Miss Gladys sat upon a rock to read. As she did so a tiny skiff skimmed along as near the land as the shallow water would let it. When the sailor who was in it saw her, he waded to shore and came to her. He was a good, simple fellow, who lived in one of the huts on the beach, and worked sometimes with colliers, sometimes with fishing-smacks. He was full of trouble now, and poured his sorrow out to her. It seemed that he had been on shore seeking her. His wife, who was on board a fishing-smack that lay off the land, some mile or so westward down the coast, was very ill—dying, he feared—and had begged of him, if he could find Miss Gladys, to entreat of her to go and speak to her. He had been compelled to come to the village for bread, and tackle, and other things he needed, but he could not find the doctor. This woman was a delicate, pretty, good-living creature, and Miss Gladys had won her heart with many little services in the drear winter-time gone by. It was a common thing with her to visit the people on board their vessels, for she loved nothing so well as to sail to and fro on the sea. She told the sailor that she would come at once.

'Come!' she called to her faithful dog, Bronze; but the sailor stopped her.

'I dare not take him, miss—not for our lives!' he said. 'He's the weight of a man; and the boat is overerowed now with the things as I've had to get: you're to the full as I dare carry.'

'I cannot leave him!' she answered, shrinking back: and, indeed, she never had left him. He was always with her, whether on sea or land.

'I can go and come for you again, miss,' said the fisherman ruefully; 'but it will take a goodish bit of time—and Jenny so bad, and nobody but the boy with her, and the doctor not to the fore neither! Surely the dog'll wait for you here, miss, safe enow? Not as I'd be pressing you.'

But he did press her—pressed her sorely. It was very reluctantly that she consented to leave Bronze there. Nothing but the thought of the sick and lonely woman would ever have persuaded her. As it was, she threw her arms about him and kissed her dog fondly, and then pointed to the basket of shells and sea-weed on the red smooth piece of rock.

'Take care of them, Bronze,' she murmured, 'and wait till I come back. Wait here.'

She did not mean to command; she only meant to console him by the appointment of some service. Bronze looked into her face with eyes of woe and longing, but he made no moan or sound, but only stretched himself beside the basket on guard.

The boat flew like a sea-gull over the waves, the sun bright upon her sail. Bronze, left upon the rock, lifted his head and gave one long wail. It echoed woefully over the wide, quiet waters. Nothing was in sight except that single little sail shining against the light, and flitting, flitting away.

Bronze never moved, and his eyes never turned

from the little boat that had gone and left him there. An hour drifted by, and ere long the sand, hitherto so smooth and beautifully ribbed, grew moist, and glistened with a gleam of water, like eyes that fill with tears. Bronze never saw: he only watched the far-off boat. A little later the water gushed above the sand, and gathering in a frail, rippling edge of foam, rolled up and broke upon the rock.

And still he never saw, for still he watched the boat. A while, and the water grew in volume, and all around the tide rose silently about the rocks and stones, gliding and glancing in all the channels of the shore, until the sands were covered.

The waters rose till they touched the rock; but he never moved. Stretched out upon the stone, guarding the things which his mistress had left in his care, and with his eyes fastened on the sail which rose against the light on the distant horizon, he waited for death.

His mistress had not forgotten her faithful companion. As soon as she reached the fishing-smack where the sick woman was she begged the sailor to go back and see to Bronze. He went, and as he neared the rock he saw the brave dog awaiting death. Just as the sailor, straining his weary arms to reach the shore, came in sight of it, a great wave surged over the dog, breaking upon him and sweeping him away. He rose, grasping in his teeth the basket of weeds and shells. He had waited until the last. Driven from the post which he would not forsake, the love of life awoke in him, and of his own will he struggled against death.

Three times he sank, three times he rose. The sea was now strong, and deep, and swift of pace, rushing madly in; and he was cumbered with shells and the weighty basket with its sea-weeds, which yet he never yielded because it had been entrusted to him by his mistress. The sailor, weary though he was, bent to the oar, while he shouted words of cheer to the brave dog battling with the waves. And to his joy, before faithful Bronze was sucked down by the hungry waves, he grasped his collar and pulled him, spent and panting, into the skiff, grasping still the basket in his teeth. And then the sailor rowed wearily and slowly through the gathering night to the fishing-smack, where Miss Gladys, as a ministering angel, was tending his ailing wife. With joy she welcomed the companion of her solitary wanderings, and when she heard the story of his faithfulness, even unto death, she threw her arms round his neck and caressed him, resolving never again to put his fidelity and obedience to so terrible a test.

A SHARP RETORT.

A TRAIN was carrying in a compartment of the third class a clergyman and five or six young ragamuffins, rascals who, to annoy the minister, kept scoffing at religion and telling disagreeable stories.

The good man endured it all, hearing everything without answering, without being moved. Arrived at his journey's end he got out, and only remarked,—

'We shall meet again, my children.'

'Why shall we meet again?' said the leader of the band.

'Because I am a prison chaplain,' was the reply.

C. S. C.

THE TWO BEARS.

(Translated from the Italian of
Gozzi's *Oriental Tales*.)

WO great friends, a painter and a goldsmith, once travelled together. The night overtaking them near a monastery they asked for shelter there, and were hospitably received. As the purses of our travellers were too empty to admit of their continuing their journey, the painter, who was skilful in his art, offered to work for the monastery, and before long he so grew in the esteem of the good monks that they had the greatest confidence in him. However, they were destined to lament having put so much faith in him.

It happened that one night the monks left the sacristy door open, whereupon the goldsmith and painter went in, and, after having made a bundle of all the gold and silver vessels that were there, they both took to flight. Having possessed themselves of such costly booty, they now thought only of returning to their own country. On their arrival, in order to prevent the discovery of their theft, they locked up the stolen wealth in a coffer, agreeing that neither of them should touch it without warning the other.

A little time after the goldsmith married, and in time became the father of two sons. His expenses increasing with his family, in order to supply his needs he made use of a large portion of the treasure contained in the coffer, and when taxed by the painter with his bad faith he persisted in denying the theft.

The painter, savage at his friend's perfidy, pondered how to avenge himself; and to do so with greater security, he pretended for the time to believe the solemn oaths of his accomplice. He then begged one of his friends, a hunter, to let him have two live bear-cubs, and as soon as he got these he made a statue in wood, so like the goldsmith in feature, size, and dress, that the eye was completely deceived. He then taught the two cubs to take their food from the hands of this statue. Daily led to the room where this figure was, they no sooner saw it than they leapt towards it, and took from its hands the food that had been placed there for them.

The painter continued patiently for several months to accustom them to this practice, and when the cubs were thoroughly used to it, he invited the goldsmith and his two sons to supper with him. Then, early in the morning, he carried off the children from their room, and placed the cubs in their place.

The goldsmith's wonder when he found, instead of his children, two bear-cubs in their room, cannot even be described. At first, full of fright, he began to say whatever came into his head. The painter played the part of a man full of astonishment, and told his guest that so wondrous a transformation must be Heaven's punishment for his having done some great sin. The goldsmith would not, however, let himself be deceived by these words; and, believing that the painter was the cause of the change, he obliged him to appear before the judge, accusing him of having stolen his children.

'Sir,' said the painter, 'you can easily clear up this

matter; order the cubs to be brought here, and if their gestures and caresses prove that they distinguish the goldsmith from every one else, there can no longer be any doubt of their being his sons.'

The judge approved of the experiment. The two cubs, who had been left unfed by the painter for a couple of days, no sooner perceived the goldsmith than they ran towards him and licked his hands. At this sight every one was filled with wonder, and the judge himself was too puzzled to know how to decide the question.

The goldsmith, overwhelmed with wonder, went back to the painter's house, threw himself on his knees before him, confessed his treachery, and entreated him to pray that God would restore his children to their natural form.

The painter pretended to be touched, and both of them passed the night in prayer. He had first taken the precaution to remove the bears, and in exchange he put back the goldsmith's two children, hitherto kept well hidden. The painter led their father to the room, and having restored them to him said,—

'Our prayers are answered, and may you learn henceforth not to fail in your agreements!'

CARLO VITI.

A SUMMER RAMBLE.



HAT a delightful place is the Isle of Wight for an excursion! A few years back we spent our summer holidays there, and I have a happy recollection of many a ramble in the woods and meadows in search of wild flowers. Then there was the regatta to be witnessed at Ryde, a sight not soon to be forgotten.

But the best thing of all was our cruise round the island in a pleasure-boat. The coast along the south side is rugged and grand, and when we reached the magnificent bay of Freshwater, which is not far from the western extremity of the island, we ran up right into the cavern of massive rock, from whose recesses you gain a charming peep towards the opening expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. Very near this cavern stand out two huge rocks, through one of which, in the course of centuries, the rolling waters have pierced an archway.

What power there is in the waves when they rage horribly! Yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. He, and He alone, can still the 'raging of the sea.'

I well remember standing on the craggy shore at Freshwater, looking out in wonderment upon the great chalk cliffs, of which a long chain stretches westward, ending with the Needles. Perched on the heights were scores of sea-birds, for many varieties of the feathered tribes make their haunts in this neighbourhood.

It may be that I shall live to travel far and wide among scenes more glorious still, but nothing will ever give me greater pleasure than did our six-weeks' wanderings in the Isle of Wight.

E. L.



Arched Rock, Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight.



HOP-PICKING

THERE are probably few of our young readers living in the country towns of the pleasant counties of Kent, Surrey, or Sussex, who have not visited a hop-garden, and enjoyed its bustle and merri-

ment during the time of the picking. Our artist has drawn a picture of one of these pretty scenes. He shows us a single group of the pickers, out of the many which the farmer has called together. All

around stand the tall poles, hidden, nearly to the very top, with the leaves and blossoms of the beautiful climbing hop. Gracefully hang its curved wreaths around their supports, waving and dancing with every gentle breeze that passes through them, and glistening in the bright September sunshine. On the ground in front stands a bin, as it is called, into which a couple of women are picking the flowers from a pole that has been taken up and slanted across a bar of wood between them. Some men and children sitting or standing around complete the group. If we pass along the whole length of the hop-garden we may see many of these busy workers, surrounded by others who are either too young or too old to give their help. All seem merry and good-tempered, and the clatter of their voices, mingled with songs and laughter, fills the air. But we fancy our young readers must wonder where all these people come from. Some of them are from the neighbouring villages, but many have their homes in the crowded streets and alleys of the great smoky cities. No wonder they are so merry, for not only are they breathing the pure country air, and feeling stronger and better every hour, but they are earning a little sum of money, that will enable them to provide for some of the wants of the coming winter. As they are paid according to the quantity they pick, their fingers fly fast at their work, in order that they may make a goodly show when the men come round to measure the hops in their great baskets.

At the back of the picture, just peeping above the hop-poles, our young readers may notice a curious-looking building, with a pointed cap on the top. This is the oast, where the hops are taken to be dried. They are spread out upon a hair-cloth and heated for eight or ten hours, until quite shrivelled up, and are then taken off and laid on a floor to cool. When quite cold they are packed and pressed down in long bags, called pockets, and are then sent to market.

The hop-plant is said to have been brought into this country from France about 350 years ago (in the reign of Henry VIII.). Before that time our ancestors brewed a kind of ale from malt, but the addition of the hop was found to improve its flavour greatly, and to prevent its turning sour.

H. B. A.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 287.)

CHAPTER VIII.

YRIL was lying helplessly in bed, as he had now done for many weary days, when Marcia detected his eyes fixed with some interest on the thin sheet of paper she was holding in her hand.

'My letter from India,' said the little girl; 'shall I read you some of it, Cyril?'

Cyril nodded.

It was Dr. Ferrars' bidding at this time that his patient

must be gently roused and interested in the doings of those around him. Cyril was sunk in a sort of dejection which his weakness did not altogether

account for. So Marcia was pleased at the assent given, and began to read with comments.

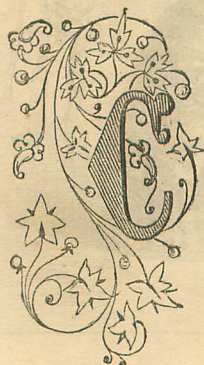
'You shall hear about Dick first,' she said. 'Mother says: "Dick is getting on so well at his lessons, and he is studying diligently all those subjects which will advance him in the line he has chosen in life." He is to be a coffee-planter,' explained Marcia, 'in Ceylon, where Uncle Harry is doing so well. You know, Cyril, we live in such a cool part of India that it is not necessary for children to be sent home for health's sake. They did not even mean to send me; but I was weakly, and the doctor thought a sea-voyage and a change of climate might do me good. And as to Dick, he is as strong as a horse, and father said if they sent him away now they might never know him, as at seventeen he is to go straight to Ceylon, and live there. Well—but I must go on. "Dick misses you terribly, both in work and play; and I dare say, though you have many playfellows, that you too long for a sight of his merry face." Oh, I do indeed!' sighed poor Marcia, breaking off for a minute; then, seeing her distressed look reflected on Cyril's face, she went on more briskly. "'But I must tell you of a plan which pleases Dick very much. It is that, when father and I go to England to fetch you home, which, please God! we think of doing in a very few years, we should all stay in Ceylon on our way back, and make acquaintance with Dick's future home. Will not that be delightful for all of us?'"

Marcia paused again and looked over her letter.

'I was a little impatient last time I wrote home,' she explained; 'and I said I felt as if the years would never pass before I might go home; and I said that when things went wrong here, I did not know what to do, with mother so far off; so she says, "It is natural for my little girl to miss me, and to feel puzzled at times for a guiding hand. It reminds me of little Tom, when Dick took all the chairs out of his way, and set him on his feet alone in the middle of the room. He fell once or twice at first, trying to walk; but in a very little while he set off manfully by himself, and, keeping his eye always on me, toddled at last into my arms. This is a little parable for my Marcia to read. She must learn not to lean on earthly supports. I would not wish to come between my little girl and her true helper."

'I suppose,' mused Marcia, aloud, 'that is one reason I had to come to England. I could not make it out at all, at first. I thought I must go all wrong away from mother and home; but now, as she says, perhaps it will make me feel like she does—that God really helps us to do right, if we want Him very much to do so. When I said my prayers at night, I used to try and remember mother's face—so kind and so listening, you know, Cyril—and at first I was sorry when it did not come; but now I try to say my prayers right up into Heaven, and I am beginning to feel as if He listened, and was—oh, very kind, too; and now I go to bed happy and wake happy, because I have nothing of yesterday to trouble me. But, oh, Cyril, are you in pain? Have I tired you? Let me call Aunt Charlotte.'

Tears were slowly trickling down poor Cyril's pale face—tears that his crippled hands could not wipe away; but he gasped out a hasty entreaty to Marcia



not to leave him, for he wanted to say something to her. Marcia dried his tears, and waited in some alarm and self-reproach for her cousin's slow and hesitating words.

'Marcia, I am so unhappy!' began poor Cyril. 'Everything is all wrong with me. May I tell it you? I wanted to do so before the night I fell ill, and you may tell father and Aunt Charlotte, and—God, if you will; and then I can begin straight again, perhaps, or be forgiven and die; that would be easiest.'

And then Cyril began the story of his acquaintance with young Morley, his frequent meetings and correspondence, winding up with the account of the skating expedition, and his immersion in the water.

Marcia listened in consternation. Such a terrible tale of deceit had never reached her ears before. She became bewildered in her attempts to distinguish between wilful sin and weak yielding to temptation; and when her cousin had finished he looked despairingly in her grieved face.

'You think I am too bad to be forgiven, Marcia,' he said. 'I dare say it is true. Well, go away and leave me. You are not likely to understand any one like me.'

But a light seemed to break through the clouds and shine on Marcia's puzzled face.

'It doesn't matter how bad you have been, Cyril dear,' she said, eagerly. 'You are sorry, are you not? You want to lead a new life now, don't you?'

'Indeed I do,' groaned poor Cyril.

'Well, then, you can be forgiven: you are forgiven. Just like I am when I have said my prayers at bedtime.'

'But suppose I do the same again, by-and-by?' said Cyril.

'Then you'll be forgiven again, if you are sorry again,' protested Marcia, stoutly. 'But you will take care and try—like I do—not to do the same wrong things again. Don't you remember in *Agathos* how the lion was always behind the bushes, in wait to spring on the children when they happened to forget him? You must try not to forget your lion, Cyril.'

'It will be always trying and always failing,' said poor Cyril, in despair. 'Oh, Marcia! if I could just get forgiven, I should like to die at once.'

'And grieve uncle and aunt, and Greta and Bob?' said Marcia, thoughtfully. 'I don't think that would be brave, Cyril dear. I think God means us to be good and happy here for a time, and enjoy all the pleasant things in this world; and then, when He likes, He will take us to a better world. But see, here is your beef-tea. Let me give you that.'

Cyril murmured an impatient refusal; but Marcia waited a moment by his side, and was rewarded by a 'Here, I'll take it,' from the sick boy. It was Cyril's first effort in the new life he had set before him.

'You may tell father on Sunday,' whispered Cyril, as he lay down again. 'I want him to know, and I can't say it all to him. And, Marcia, till I'm well, will you come and say your prayers every night in my room? I want to learn your ways.'

Mr. Tredthorpe had been down several times in the course of his son's illness, but in consequence of

Mrs. Tredthorpe falling ill also in town, he had never remained more than a night at Northholme. Now, however, he was expected for three whole days, and Greta was in great glee at the prospect.

There was reason for joy. Cyril was really better—was looking almost smiling that Sunday morning, propped up in bed and waiting for his dinner; for Marcia had told his father all his troubles and sins, and Mr. Tredthorpe had said an unwonted word of counsel and love in the boy's ear, which sank all the more deeply as coming from one who seldom spoke on such matters, and yet whose life showed that he thought much of them.

'I never knew father was so really good till to-day,' whispered Cyril, as he bade Marcia good night that evening. 'He was always kind, but to-night he talked like you, Martie.'

'Oh, no!' protested Marcia. 'But, Cyril dear, you are trying to be good yourself, so you can see the good in others. And now you are to do as uncle says, and forget all these troubles, and remember it is your duty to eat, and sleep, and get well.'

'Just the life of a respectable pig,' said Cyril, smiling.

And Marcia smiled too, very glad to see the cloud lifted from the poor, thin face at last.

The smile did not vanish, only took a more lasting form, when she too laid down in bed that night, and added Cyril's name to the list of those she remembered in her last waking thoughts.

Home was a long way off, but she was finding happiness and friends in the new country.

Meantime Mr. Tredthorpe, Aunt Charlotte, and Dr. Ferrars, were in full consultation over the state of affairs at Northholme, and Marcia's name came often into the conversation.

'The kindest little soul that ever breathed!' said Mr. Tredthorpe.

'And the most considerate and useful,' said Aunt Charlotte, thinking of Marcia's aptitude for remembering the right thing at the right moment, and her gentle movements in a sick-room. 'What should we have done without her?'

'She is the handiest little nurse I ever saw,' said Dr. Ferrars. 'But for all that I am very glad to see you back here, Miss Charlotte, as the strain was becoming too great for such a child. Cyril would hardly let her go out of his sight; and between ourselves, I fear little Miss Marcia has not much strength to fall back upon,—strength of body, I mean. I know she has wonderful presence of mind.'

Mr. Tredthorpe looked grave, his little niece was becoming very dear to him.

'However, I do not wish to be considered a croaker,' continued Dr. Ferrars; 'only I think a change would do little Miss Marcia good, if it could be managed. Don't let her be too much in the sick-room. Send her out every day on the pony.'

'I could take her back to London with me,' said Mr. Tredthorpe, 'but then my wife is ill there.'

'Not to be thought of!' said Dr. Ferrars, hastily. 'I only wish caution observed. Now I must go. Cyril already asleep, you say? Good! There will be no further cause of anxiety with him, I see.'

(To be continued.)



Marcia reading the Indian letter.

Chatterbox.



"Oh, nonsense! no!" declared Ronald, who had a newspaper in his hand.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 295.)

CHAPTER IX.



THE end of the Christmas holidays came all too soon. In spite of accidents and sickness, the young Tredthorpes had managed to enjoy their country sojourn; and Bob and Greta, Cyril and Marcia, were each in their own way regretting the approaching change.

Bob loudly expressed his disgust at having to return alone to his day-school, Cyril being still too weak to think of lessons. Greta objected to 'prim ways and tidy walks'—her great bugbear in London. Cyril was sorry to be left behind, even with grandfather and Aunt Charlotte; and Marcia, to her own shame and confusion, felt a distaste for all active occupations such as prevailed in the London schoolroom under Miss Milward. She had grown quiet and dreamy of late, caused by sitting so much in Cyril's sick-room it was thought. So, though it would have been very convenient to keep the little girl at Northholme as a companion to the invalid, since he was much attached to her, care for her welfare led Aunt Charlotte to despatch her with the rest.

Ronald, the eldest brother, was in Mornington Terrace when the party arrived, he having spent his holidays there on hearing of the necessity for quiet at Northholme, and Marcia now saw him for the first time.

He was a handsome boy, with Greta's open countenance, and more than Greta's good looks. He, too, regarded Marcia as a mere child, and, after a kindly greeting, took very little notice of her.

Bob and Greta were highly delighted to hear that Ronald had still one more week's holiday, and that Miss Milward would not make her appearance till the close of that time.

'So we can enjoy ourselves together,' said Ronald. 'You will have to go to school on Monday, Bob; but you needn't be very regular this one week, and we shall have the evenings.'

Now that Mrs. Tredthorpe had the young people back again, and could interest herself in little Prince and Prue once more, Mr. Tredthorpe ventured to leave her, and run down for a week at Northholme. He was anxious to see Cyril again, and to learn how soon he would be fit to be moved.

Meanwhile Ronald and Bob were always together, and very seldom at home. Greta complained loudly at not being included in their schemes of pleasure, but, somehow, it seemed more convenient to leave her out.

'You see, girls can't always go where boys do,' explained Bob, one day. 'Ronald's going to take me to the Athletic Sports to-morrow.'

'But I could have gone to the Wax-works and to the Ballad Concert, and all that,' said Greta. 'And so could Marcia. It isn't like holidays, with you and Ronald rushing off alone everywhere.'

'Well, then, you shall go next time,' promised Bob, rashly. 'Ronald won't mind.'

Next time was an expedition to Richmond, to visit a second cousin of Mrs. Tredthorpe's. Ronald met him in the street one day, and he gave a general invitation to his young relatives to come down and spend a day at the Hawthorns, his pretty little house by the river-side.

'We'll take Greta and Marcia,' said Bob. 'It will be fun to show the girls the place.'

'Oh, I say! Greta might do, but that little thing will be in the way,' said Ronald.

'Indeed she's as old as Greta,' protested Bob, 'and much cleverer. It's because of her short hair you think her a baby, Ronald. She's up to everything.'

Ronald was not satisfied, but Bob was so persistent that he gave in, and Mrs. Tredthorpe was teased into giving an unwilling consent to the girls accompanying the brothers on the expedition.

'Now, don't be late, dears, and do exactly as Mr. Hall wishes, and I shall look for you by the seven-o'clock train.'

'Oh, mother, no!' protested Ronald. 'Let us take our time. We can't be home then, indeed.'

And amid protestations and entreaties from Mrs. Tredthorpe the little party drove off to the station. Rachel, to the boys' intense disgust, being sent with them to see them safely off.

When they reached the Hawthorns, to Greta's great surprise, there was only Cousin Gaston at home, a lad of seventeen. Mr. and Mrs. Hall, with their two daughters, had gone to pay a two-days' visit in the next county.

Neither Ronald nor Bob showed as much surprise as Greta at this news; in fact, they had had a letter that very morning from Mr. Hall, mentioning the circumstance and advising a postponement of the visit, adding,—

'But if you still care to come, Gaston will do his best for you.'

Bob's first idea was to go and leave the girls; but Ronald, to his surprise, advised all going as arranged.

'If mother finds out only Gaston is there, she won't like any of us going,' he declared.

And he was right; for Gaston Hall had the reputation among his relatives of being but a scatter-brained young fellow.

However, there they were dependent on his hospitality, and even the little girls had nothing to complain of on that score. He was really very good-natured, and gave them rides on the quietest pony in the stables, while Bob and Ronald amused themselves very much by practising jumping at a bar in the paddock.

A tandem drive came off safely also. Greta was a little nervous about that, though Marcia, ignorant of danger, thought it delightful to be perched on the high dog-cart.

'You are a brick, little one!' said Ronald at last, pleased with her freedom from fear. 'Gaston, is the boat to be had now?'

All the resources of the Hawthorns were evidently to be ransacked; and the day being mild and sunny, outdoor pleasures were very delightful to the little Londoners.

But Gaston had other plans, which he opened out to Ronald. This place was all very well in summer; but boating was not the thing for this time of year; and why should they not wind up the day well by going to a pantomime?

'Back to London?' said Greta.

'Of course!' said Ronald, chiming in with the grown-up cousin. 'Father meant to have taken us one day.'

'But father is not here,' said Greta, slowly, 'to— to manage and see about it all.'

'But Cousin Gaston can do all that quite as well,' said Ronald.

'Won't mother be frightened, if we don't come home till late?' persisted Greta.

'Oh, nonsense! no!' declared Ronald, who had a newspaper in his hand. 'Look here, Bob. Here's the very thing going on we wanted to see—lots of brigands, and that sort of thing, and a little girl rescued. Just what you'd like, Greta.'

'Oh, let me see!' cried Greta, excitedly. 'Oh, yes, Marcia, that would be nice; and for this very night, too.'

'Well, it's all settled, then,' said Gaston. 'We'll leave by the five train and drive straight to the theatre, and have no end of fun.'

But little Marcia, who had looked very thoughtful throughout the conversation, now crept up to Bob and whispered something in his ear.

'Not quite right! not what we ought to do! Oh, bother, Martie!' repeated Bob. 'If all of us don't mind, you oughtn't to. You are the youngest, you know; and besides, we're not going to do anything wrong.'

'I don't think they would like it at home,' said Marcia, in a low tone. 'Not at my home, Bob dear, and not at yours. It would be different if Uncle Tredthorpe was here.'

'Oh, I say, Ronald,' protested Bob, 'here's Marcia going to have scruples! 'Do come and talk to her.'

'Martie dear,' said Ronald, loftily, 'you must be a good little girl, and do as we bid you. You may be sure, if Greta and I don't mind, it is all right.'

Poor Marcia! she looked round in vain. Every-one was against her. Greta was wildly eager to see this particular play; and it was impossible any one could mind, for father always took them once to the theatre every holidays, she declared.

'Let us first ask auntie,' suggested Marcia.

But she was cried down again. There was no time.

'Then let the boys go,' whispered the little girl to Greta, 'and we could go to Mornington Terrace.'

'Oh, Marcia, I never knew you so tiresome!' declared Greta. 'Just when everything was arranging itself so delightfully! Gaston, do talk to her.'

Gaston, always good-natured, drew the little cousin to his side, and pointed out to her how easy and happy was the arrangement decided on. There was no reason against it. What made her object? She did not look like a selfish little girl who would mar the pleasure of others for a mere whim.

Poor Marcia was ready to cry with bewilderment.

Kindness made it all the harder for her to hold to what she thought right, and now, when Greta did not stand by her, she knew not what to do.

'Auntie did not give us leave to go,' she stammered out; 'and isn't it wrong to go without her knowing?'

'My dear little girl, your auntie knows you are with me,' said Gaston, gently. 'And she would trust me like—like your uncle,' he added, stretching a point. 'There, that is all settled; now come to dinner,' he added, 'for we have not much time to lose. You see we leave Richmond even earlier than Mrs. Tredthorpe desired you to do.'

'Oh, dear!' said Marcia, as she put on her things to go to the station that evening, 'I wish I was safe at home, Greta! This is such a hard world to live in.'

But Greta was dancing with excitement and expectation.

'Marcia, you are too tiresome!' was all she said. 'Quite a wet blanket, as Bob says.'

Bob, too! that was hard. Marcia cried a few quiet tears, and then felt better.

She had made her protest, and she could do no more. She could not go back to Mornington Terrace by herself. All she still might do was to make one more appeal, on reaching London, to be allowed to go home. With this intention she leaned quietly back in the railway carriage, and, tired with her long exciting day, she fell asleep.

(To be continued.)

MEDUSÆ.



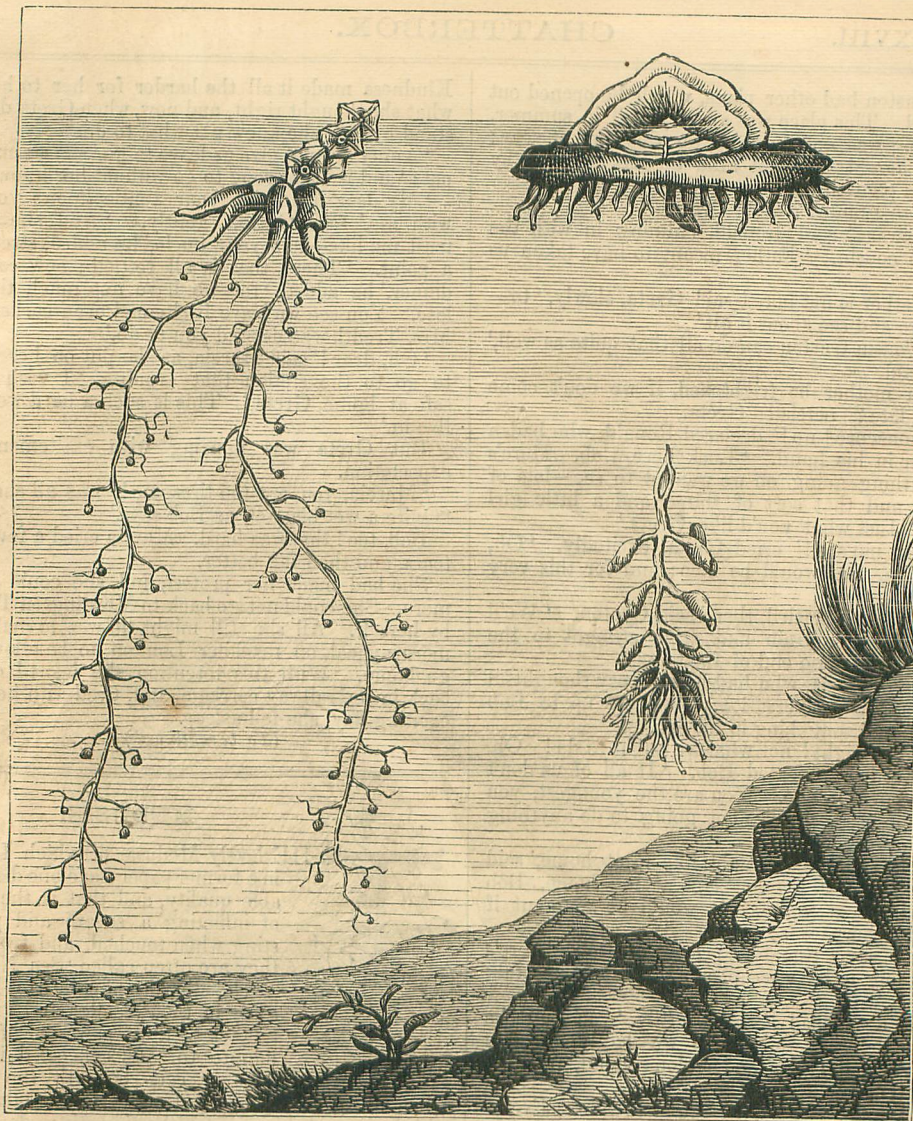
THE lovely Medusæ of which I wrote in a former paper have one disagreeable quality, and that is the power of inflicting a severe and painful sting when touched, and from this they are often called 'Sea Nettles.'

The stinging apparatus is hidden away in their slender and graceful tentacles, and consists of very minute threads concealed in tiny bags or cells beneath the skin;

when touched, the Medusa at once twines its tentacles tightly around the offender, the tiny stings dart forth and emit a poisonous liquid, which raises white blisters, or wheals, similar to those caused by the nettle, but a great deal more painful, and attended with very serious effects.

I have read an account of a Mr. Bennett, who was so anxious to know what were the real sensations and consequences produced by the sting of the beautiful *Physalia*, or 'Portuguese Man-of-War,' that he exposed himself to the creature's fury, thereby making a martyr of himself for the benefit of mankind in general, and of scientific people in particular. The account of his experiment and sufferings is too long to relate in full, therefore I will only give a few extracts:—

'On seizing it,' he says, 'it raised the long cables by muscular contraction of the bands situated at the base of the feelers, and twined the slender appendages about my hand and finger, inflicting severe and pungent pain, adhering at the same time so firmly as



Medusæ.

to be extremely difficult of removal The pain extended upwards along the arm, increasing not only in extent but in severity, and could only be compared to a severe rheumatic attack. . . . The pain began gradually to abate, but a peculiar numbness was felt for some hours afterwards; and the skin displayed white wheals on the parts stung.

Certainly, if 'experience teaches,' the enterprising gentleman must have received a lesson, with which he was doubtless quite satisfied, and which he had no desire to repeat.

The young of the Medusæ are produced from eggs, and bear little or no resemblance to the parent during the first period of their existence; like the baby crabs, they pass through various stages and assume various shapes before attaining their proper 'grown-up' size and appearance.

The specimen represented in the picture with very

long trailing tentacles belongs to the class called *Hydromedusæ*; though it is so far agile it can float on the roughest waves with safety. Even when a severe tempest has lashed the waves into foam, the *Hydromedusæ* are not submerged; nothing can force them beneath the surface.

The Medusa on the other side of the illustration is the *Velella*; it possesses, as you see, a kind of sail, by means of which it is wafted swiftly along the surface of the water: indeed, it is not unlike a tiny boat: its colour is blue, tinged with green and purple.

Very different in shape is the specimen suspended in the water beneath the *Velella*, bearing the hard scientific name of *Physophora disticha*; it has a slender stalk, ornamented on each side with three buds or flowers, yellow in hue, and something like the common foxglove of our lanes and woods. At the lower bud of the stalk is a bunch of semi-transparent



tentacles of a delicate pink, shading off to white, and terminating in a sucker.

The more we read of the varied shapes and colours of these inhabitants of the sea, so much the more does our admiration and wonder increase, and we must all agree with the author who, in writing of what he terms 'Living Jellies,' observes that—

'Figured by Hand Divine, there's not a gem
Wrought by man's art to be compared to them.'

ANNA C. WHEELLEY.

THE WILD BOAR.

THE Wild Boar, as our young readers may see by the picture, is very like the common pig, but has a longer snout and thicker hair, while its body is more gaunt and bony. Sticking out on each side of its mouth are two big teeth, called tusks, which are much smaller in the pig. The boar is no quiet, lazy dweller in a sty; his home is in the great, gloomy forest, where he sleeps during the day in

some cave or thicket, only rousing at the approach of twilight to walk abroad in search of food. He eats acorns, nuts, and different kinds of vegetables, but is particularly fond of roots, to get at which he tears up the ground with his long snout. Sometimes he comes out of the forest and helps himself to the farmer's corn, treading it down and doing much damage in a single night. The sow, as the female is called, is most kind and attentive to her young, and keeps them under her care until they are two or three years old. A number of mothers with their families may often be seen herding together. Should a wolf or any other enemy approach, they form a circle and place the little ones in the centre, to protect them from danger. At the end of five years the boars have reached their full size, but they live to the age of from twenty-five to thirty years.

These animals are still found in France, Germany, and other parts of Europe, as well as in Asia and Africa, but at one time they were common in the forests of our island. We read in history, that in the reign of William the Conqueror hunting the wild boar was a favourite pastime with the nobles; and a cruel law was passed, that if any person killed one of them without permission he was to have his eyes put out. Our forefathers killed the boar by means of their short spears or swords, after he was brought to bay by the dogs. As soon as a boar is roused in his lair by the dogs he endeavours to escape, foaming at the mouth with rage; every now and then he suddenly turns round on his pursuers, and rushes at them with great violence, striking with his tusks, and goring the dogs and men. In one instance a boar is said to have attacked fifty dogs, killing six or seven of them in as many seconds, and wounding all the rest except ten. In India the huntsmen ride on horseback, and throw short spears at the boar as he runs; he often turns round and dashes boldly at the horses, sometimes dragging them to the ground, and wounding them severely. It is related that on one occasion a boar, having been driven by a number of hunters into an open space, attacked all the horses that came near him with such violence that they reared, plunged, and threw off their riders. After some time the whole party had to give up the pursuit, and he escaped into the jungle.

In our illustration the dogs appear to have got the better of the boar, one having sprung upon his back and seized him by the ear, in such a manner as to prevent him using his tusks.

H. B. A.

BRAVE BOUSSARD, THE FAMOUS PILOT OF DIEPPE.



It was on the 31st of August, 1777. A terrible storm was lashing into fury the waves of the sea. The wind blew violently from the land, and made it quite impossible for a small cutter, laden with salt, which was making for Dieppe, to run into the harbour of that seaport, though the captain, sailors, and steersman were straining every nerve to do so.

As often as the vessel approached the entrance of

the harbour, the force of the storm drove her back again into the midst of the roaring waves, and every moment the danger that she would founder increased. Like a plaything she was cast hither and thither by the violence of the sea. Black thunder-clouds lay everywhere on the horizon. Gradually, all order and discipline were forgotten by the sailors. Wringing their hands, weeping, sobbing, praying, and cursing by turns, they ran round the ship, gazing despairingly at the shore, which, though so near, they could not reach. The water was rising higher and higher in the hold. Everything they could spare had been thrown overboard to lighten the ship. But all was of no avail. As evening approached the storm, instead of abating, had become more violent. After nightfall, if the gale continued, there could be no hope for the little vessel and her crew.

In all the sea-ports on the Norman coast dwell experienced sailors, who act as pilots to steer ships into the harbours. As each vessel must take a pilot, it is the duty of these men always when a ship is in danger to hasten to her assistance. They are a brave race, who care neither for stormy wind nor roaring waves. They must neither think of wife nor child, no, not even of their own lives, when their duty calls them to go to the aid of their brethren in distress. Neither on this occasion had they been backward, for several pilots had ventured out in a small boat to render assistance to the unfortunate cutter. Three times, however, the waves had capsized their boat, and it was only by swimming that the brave men had escaped to the shore, and then ropes had to be thrown out to them, by which they were dragged to the land. Bold as they were, not one of them would make the venture again.

Not a man in the town remained at home that evening. Nearly all the inhabitants of Dieppe stood on the pier, following with sympathising looks and beating hearts the efforts of the cutter. They were forced to be inactive spectators of the terrible scene. As the storm increased all hope of being able to render assistance to the poor fellows on board the cutter vanished. In those days, alas! there were no life-boats. It had become so dark now that the vessel could scarcely be seen. What could be done to save the sinking ship?

A strongly-built, fine young man, now stood out from among the anxious, waiting crowd, and advanced to the edge of the pier. He had been one of the foremost among those brave fellows who had three times vainly attempted the work of rescue. He was the pilot Boussard. He could not rest nor stand there doing nothing, while brave fellows perished in sight of land, and close to assembled thousands, who could not put forth a hand to save them. With eyes full of sympathy and pity he gazed at the ship, tossed hither and thither by the fury of the waves. His own father had perished at sea, and within sight of that harbour, and since that day he had made a vow never to hesitate to risk his life to save those who were in a similar peril. Close to him stood a grey-haired old pilot, who looked as sad as he did, and muttered at last in the hearing of Boussard,—

'Poor fellows! if I were young and strong I could never sleep quietly again, unless I had saved them.'

'Do you think then, Father Pierson, that it is possible?' asked Boussard.

'Possible!' replied the old seaman; 'who can say what is possible or impossible? To the Almighty nothing is impossible, and a brave man who exerts all his strength and trusts in his God can do what other people think impossible. But, Boussard, there is no chance of doing anything with a boat.'

'How is it to be done, then?' asked Boussard, quietly.

One could hear by his voice that the old man's words had revived fresh courage and hope in his mind.

'I believe,' replied the experienced sailor, as he looked through his telescope, 'that a bold swimmer only can reach the ship. The captain appears to have lost his senses as well as his presence of mind. If one of us could succeed in reaching it by swimming, it would yet be possible to save the crew and the ship.'

Just at that moment the cutter was driven on to a sandbank, at the entrance of the harbour. A fearful crash increased the terror of the despairing crew. Their shrieks were heard above the raging of the tempest. All seemed lost now. The waves on all sides now dashed against and over the devoted vessel. Very soon, and man's frail handiwork must be shattered beneath their might, and the crew find a watery grave in the depths of the sea. If an attempt at rescue was to be made at all, now was the time.

The noble-minded Boussard could be kept back no longer. 'Those poor fellows shall be saved, or I will perish with them!' he exclaimed.

His fellow-townsmen, who heard his words and knew his valour, encouraged him. They were certain that, whatever was possible for a man to do, the brave pilot would achieve. But there were some who shook their heads; they had given up all hope, and lamented that a bold man should uselessly sacrifice his life. Boussard quickly tied a rope round his body, and sprang into the raging sea. Hundreds sank down on their knees on the shore and prayed for the brave man, that the Almighty God would protect him, and bless his heroic effort; all hearts beat rapidly, while eager looks were divided between the struggle of the vessel and the struggle of the brave swimmer with the wild waves of the furious sea.

Those who have not beheld the sea when it is lashed by a violent storm can have no idea of the terrible power of the waves. Nothing can impress the heart more with a feeling of the littleness and weakness of man, than when he stands confronted with the raging of the elements. But we often see, too, that there is One Hand that can protect and guide him. This was proved in the case of the brave, generous Boussard. It was dreadful, indeed, to behold him, now borne up high as a house on the foaming crest of a wave visible to all eyes, and the next moment buried from sight in the deep trough of the breakers. 'He is lost!' cried many, in the anguish of their hearts.

'No! no! he is the best swimmer in Dieppe,' cried others. 'He has strength and courage, his equal is nowhere to be found.'

'God will protect and bless him!' cried those who

with piety and faith trusted in the help of the Almighty and merciful God.

Thus an anxious quarter of an hour passed between hope and fear. With the strength of a giant Boussard breasted the waves. The bold swimmer could no longer be seen from the shore, but it was just light enough for the crew of the cutter to watch the man who was risking his own life to save them from impending death. A loud cry of joy greeted the approaching deliverer. The unhappy seamen had long since given up all hope. They had seen how vain all the attempts which had been made to save them had hitherto been—they could not imagine how the solitary man should venture to accomplish what had been impossible to so many. All the greater was their joy when they saw the brave fellow approaching. They were as full of hope, as just now they had been of despair; they imagined themselves, indeed, safe on shore. But much, very much had to be done before their hope could be realised.

Boussard had already approached very near to the cutter, when suddenly a huge wave seized him, and hurled him back with all its might. He was completely stunned. Before he could recover his senses he was back again on the shore, which he had left such a short time before, so full of courage and hope. There lay the poor generous man on the strand, and it was several minutes before he revived from the fearful exertion and exhaustion.

The tidings that Boussard had jumped into the sea to try to rescue the poor shipwrecked mariners had brought his wife and children down to the pier, where with anguish they had watched the struggles of their beloved husband and father. They had wrung their hands with terror whenever he threatened to sink; they had shrieked and lamented when the waves had cast him back. Now they surrounded him with mingled feelings of sorrow and joy. They implored him to give up the attempt, and not uselessly to sacrifice his life. Many of his relations and friends—even strangers, too—joined in their request. His own comrades now thought that all would be in vain. It was not to be. God Himself had declared it by allowing him to be cast back upon the shore. All entreated him to give up the attempt, as the poor shipwrecked seamen could not be helped.

'You were never in such a plight yourselves, and don't know how those poor fellows feel,' said Boussard.

Deaf to all entreaties, and to the lamentations of his wife and children, and to the advice of his companions, he tore himself from the arms which would hold him back, and again jumped into the water. But it did not last long. In a few moments a tremendous billow cast him back again on the shore.

All surrounded the brave fellow again, imploring him to desist with tears and cries. But the noble Boussard only answered, 'Don't you hear their cry for help?' He pushed back his friends who would detain him, and dashed again into the waves.

(To be continued.)





Boussard deaf to the entreaties of his wife and children.

Chatterbox.



Outside the "Public."



OUTSIDE THE 'PUBLIC.'

HERE is something charming in the willingness with which powerful animals submit to annoyances inflicted by the hands of young children, or the good-nature with which they obey them.

I lately visited at a country house where a lively little girl made live toys of a resolute pony and a large black retriever. Nip and Nelly had to bear many slashes and pokes of a big cane. I confess I was often alarmed; but the old pony and the great dog let themselves be hauled and knocked about anyhow by the little maid, who gave no heed to my warnings.

Our picture shows a group which I sketched 'outside a public' in St. John's Wood. I have no doubt the father inside felt proud of, and swaggered not a little, about the pluck of his son and heir,—the poor little frightened child outside. The pony and dog were not unhappy; and maybe the child would have cried, and his pride would have been hurt, if he had not been allowed to take charge of his friends. But what a school it is for a child, among omnibuses, carts, cabs, rough language, noise, and bustle! Must it not lead the child to think that the height of comfort is to be found inside the public-house? Thinking of the lessons in vice which the poor little boy was learning, and the scenes of sin to which he was taken, spoiled all my pleasure in the devotion of the faithful animals. How delighted I should have been had I seen that same group in the field, or before their own home, waiting while father was getting ready to go!

Twenty years ago I wanted to go with a friend from the village of Watendlath to Whiteburn, at the foot of Helvellyn. We lost the right track across the hills, and my friend's pony had got up to the saddle-flaps in a bog. This made us look about for somebody to direct us, and we saw on the top of the hill an old grey pony, a wooden sledge laden with dry fern for litter, and just such a little boy as the one in our picture. Presently the father appeared, and seeing that we were making towards him, he politely came to meet us. He thought he had better walk a little way with us to show us the road. He walked with us a couple of miles. At last our guide said that he thought we couldn't go amiss now, and that he ought to go back to look after his belongings. With many thanks my friend offered him half-a-crown, which was, however, declined in a kind manly way. My companion felt proud of the fine spirit of this poor north-country peasant, and said,—'You would not find that in the south of England,' (he had spent the earlier part of his life, as the son of a wealthy London merchant, in Surrey); 'you cannot talk to a man there without his expecting sixpence.' I fear that railways and excursion-trains have brought the north and south more closely together by creating shilling-seeking guides, as well as in many other respects; but at the same time I have talked to many a poor man in Surrey and I have had much kindness shown to me without any wish for fee or reward.



MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 299.)

CHAPTER X.

ONE of the party that left Richmond that winter's evening went to the theatre, after all. Marcia might sleep peacefully in her corner of the carriage, as far as that was concerned. She had done her best; and, come what would, she was at peace. Mother and father in far-away India, aunt and uncle in English homes, would have no reason to say that she had wilfully neglected their orders.

But her cousins, less thoughtful and more carried away by excitement than herself, needed a strong lesson to force the truth upon them that no stolen pleasures are really sweet.

The crash and the cries in the chill darkness which flung the children one upon another in their well-cushioned carriage, and proclaimed an accident of a serious nature, roused in all but Marcia an agony of terror and remorse. The hissing of escaping steam from an overturned engine, the shrieks of the badly wounded near the front of the train, and the shouts of the officials, all added to the horror of the scene.

Bob was the first to scramble to his feet, and to announce that the engine had left the rails with two other carriages—happily, not their own.

His rosy face paled at the sight of a helpless figure drawn from underneath the mass of wood-work that at Richmond had been a comfortable, well-lighted carriage.

When the first confusion was over, it was found that the stoker and one passenger were killed, and several injured. Ronald's right arm was broken, and Greta had a severe cut on the head. Bob, Gaston, and Marcia, had escaped unhurt.

After long delay the passengers were taken on to London, Greta's head and Ronald's arm being hastily bound up till proper medical attendance could be had.

Gaston's light nature was completely crushed by this terrible ending to the day's pleasure, and he could not but reproach himself as the cause. But for him the party would have left by another train.

'I say, never mind!' groaned Ronald, in answer to a remark from his cousin. 'It was all our faults; all but Marcia's. I wish we had listened to her, I know. Oh, I wish we were at home now!'

The poor boy was suffering great pain, and Greta was lying back, half unconscious, on the seat.

It was a sorrowful little party that drew up at the door in Mornington Terrace that night.

Rachel met them; and Marcia, who had got out first to avoid alarming the house by a sudden sight of the wounded, seized her, and asked,—

'Where is auntie? Keep her away.'

Mrs. Tredthorpe was in bed, happily; and Rachel was so composed and helpful that she understood the case in a moment.

Their own doctor lived close by, and it took only

a few minutes to summon him. Marcia was once again sick-nurse under Rachel.

Not for long, however; when she had held bandages for Ronald and helped to undress Greta, she was sent to bed herself. She was very weary and bewildered with the shock and fright, and was steadying herself by the wall as she crept upstairs, when a sound of sobbing arrested her.

Bob's room was close by.

'Bob dear, is that you? are you hurt?' asked Marcia; and receiving no answer, she softly opened the door to see Bob fully dressed, lying on his bed, crying bitterly.

He hastily tried to wipe away his tears on sight of his little cousin, but the sobs would continue. Marcia tried to coax and comfort him, warming his great red hands in her little white ones.

'It's all very well for you not to mind,' at last he broke out; 'but it's all wrong with us—with me, and there's no end of a trouble for father and mother, just through our horrid wilfulness. And I meant never to do wrong again after that gun affair at Northholme.'

'Bob dear, it's very sad,' began Marcia.

'Very bad, you mean!' put in Bob, savagely, wiping his eyes with a bit of the sheet.

'Very bad, dear, then,' said Marcia, gently; 'but it is not as if any of us were like the poor man that was taken from under the carriage. We still can be sorry.'

'And what's the use of being sorry if we just go and forget next time?' said Bob.

'We shall always be forgiven, dear, every time,' said Marcia; 'I know that, and so do you.'

'Why did we ever want to go to that horrid play,' said Bob, fiercely, 'when we might have known mother would have hated the girls to be out late? and now mother will be ill again with distress, and I heard Dr. Blair say, last time he came, she was in a very critical state.' And Bob plunged into the pillow again, broken-hearted and miserable.

Marcia could not leave him in such grief.

'Bob dear, don't—I think it will all come right,' she said at last.

'Yes, for you,' said Bob, shortly; 'you never meant to disobey, you can go to bed with a clean conscience. Be off, Marcia! you worry me!'

But Marcia still persevered.

'Bob dear, listen: I thought it such a dreadful thing to be sent away from home, and I cried, and cried, and could not see any good in it; and now every day I feel so much as if it was the very thing to cure me of so many faults and mistakes I never even fancied I had at home. And now this trouble has come to you, and perhaps it is the very thing to make you think and feel that it is no use pleasing oneself if it is not quite right to do so. If we had gone quite safely to the theatre and had a pleasant evening, you would never have seen this, and next time you might have done something worse, and might have got quite hardened in wanting your own way.'

'It will be ages before Ronald can go in for cricket again, Blair says,' declared Bob. 'Oh, why were we such idiots? If we had only waited, father would have managed it all for us; and now there is nothing

to be done but just watch Ronald groan. I say, how's Greta?'

'Pretty comfortable,' said Marcia. 'And now, Bob dear, do get undressed and go to bed, or you will be ill too.'

'Ill! I'm never ill—I wish I was!' said Bob; 'I'm only horrid, and forgetful, and disgusting! Oh, Marcia! stay a minute, don't leave me; tell me how you manage always to do the right thing.'

'I don't think I do do it, Bob,' said Marcia, gravely; 'but I think if I do, it is because I love people, and try to remember not to grieve them.'

'I love mother, but I can't remember that,' said Bob. 'Marcia, they must have a better way of bringing up in your home than in mine; I can't describe it, but it seems as if you got all your good there from the very beginning. I don't mean to be wicked, but it seems to me as if you didn't find much difference between that and Heaven.'

Marcia paused and considered.

'It is like a sort of Heaven, Bob, my own home, where every one loves me: but there is a difference; trouble comes there, when we, Dick and I, are naughty, or when any one dies, like my little sister. Now, in Heaven there is to be no more sickness or pain; and all we love will be there, too, with God and pleasant things. Mother often talks to me about it, and now I am far away from her I think a great deal of my two homes.'

'And which do you wish to go to?' whispered Bob, raising himself on his elbow. 'I think if I was as good as you, Marcia, I should like all this worry of doing wrong over.'

'And go to Heaven?' added Marcia, quietly. 'Bob, I do think it over in bed sometimes, and wonder if, perhaps, I shall have to go to that home first, for I am not strong like you and Greta, and I often feel as if I could not last through the six years I must stay in England, and the many lessons I must learn, and the great sea I must cross: it is all too much for me; and though I see mother's face in the Indian home waiting for me and looking out for me, I do not think it would be more sorrowful if it was looking at me in Heaven.'

'And you don't care about leaving us?' said Bob.

'Oh, I do! I do!' exclaimed Marcia: 'indeed, Bob, you must not say that. And often when I seem to tease you and worry you with wanting you to do differently, I only want you to do right because it is right, and it will make you happier. You have got it in you, Bob, just like poor Cyril.'

'But I can't help being always in raging spirits,' said Bob, 'and getting wrong through that. If I was only a bit sickly, and thoughtful, and fond of reading and quietness, I might have hope for myself, but I can't be like that.'

Marcia smiled. 'Dick is like you, Bob; and, oh! I wouldn't have him different to you a bit. Don't you think it is nice to think of growing up a strong, good man, with a body and a soul both ready for anything—anything good, I mean? That is what makes me wish to live—wanting to do something, if only a little good; and you and Dick can do so much.'

'Can we?' said Bob, more hopefully. 'I say, Marcia, I shall tell mother all our plans to-morrow—



It was a sorrowful little party that drew up at the door that night.

our bad plans, I mean, and then I can start fair. I shan't like it, but it will be best.

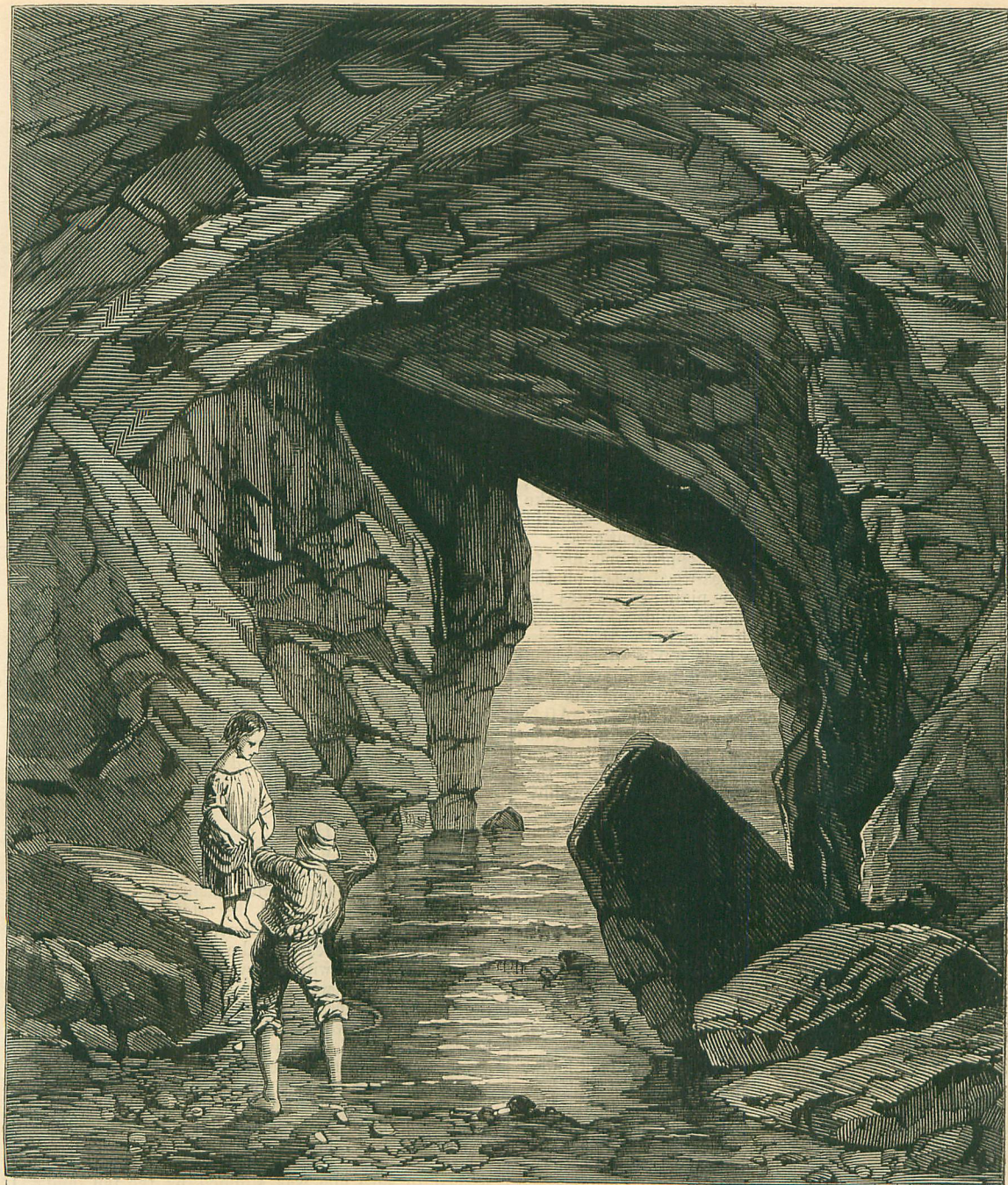
'Quite best, dear,' said Marcia; and now you will sleep comfortably, so good night.'

'Good night,' said Bob, tumbling off the bed and pulling off his boots. 'I shan't turn in myself though till I have listened at Ronald's door: he has come off worst, poor chap!'

(To be continued.)

'LOOKING FOR FATHER.'

THE big waves broke with a dash and a roar upon the beach, and the wind rose high and whistled drearily round the little cottages where the fishermen lived, and the women looked anxiously out to sea, saying that a storm was at hand. Most of the boats were in, though—all but George Harding's, one of the strongest and haldest of the men of that Cornish village.



A strong arm lifted Fanny from her perch.

'He'll be home soon,' the mother said to her two little questioning children; but though she dished up the potatoes and bade them eat their dinner, and talked to them as cheerily as she could, her heart was heavy, and again and again she stood by the casement-window and watched the rising mist with anxious eyes.

As the evening drew on the storm arose, and even the sound of the wind seemed lost in the dash of the

waves upon the shore, and the little Hardings cowered closer to their mother's side, and cried because they were frightened and 'wanted father home.' But at last they went to sleep, while poor Bessie Harding kept her solitary watch by the window, sending up many a prayer to God that He would preserve all who were in peril on the sea, and guide the little boat safely home.

It was a long, long night, but at length morning

broke upon a quiet sea, and the wind had dropped, and the waves had given up their angry beating upon the pebbles on the beach, and came tumbling merrily and brightly over each other, and then running back again into the deep blue water.

'He'll be home now, if he's weathered the night,' said the fisherman's wife to her children; but the eldest of them—little Fanny—was thinking in her own mind that she could not wait, but would go and seek her father. She had not much notion of how to set about her search—poor little six-year old girl!—but somehow she fancied that if she walked on and on towards Lulworth by the side of the sea, she should meet the boat coming homeward, and then father would see her and row to shore, and take her up and let her sit among the fishing-nets as he rowed along to the part of the coast which was nearest their cottage. So little Fanny watched for a chance of slipping out of the door, and it only took her a few seconds to reach the shingle; and once free, she sped along, as fast as her small feet would take her, towards Lulworth, which was the direction in which father turned his boat when he went away.

As the child went along she stopped sometimes to pick up some pretty piece of sea-weed, tossed on the shingle during the storm of the night; sometimes she met with one of the neighbours' children, who tried to tempt her to paddle with them in the rock-pools, or run down to meet the little waves which came creeping in as gently as if they did not know how to foam and dash; but no, Fanny only said she was 'going to meet father,' and she could not stay. After an hour's walking, Lulworth seemed as far off as ever, and Fanny grew tired; but still she went on her way, gazing out anxiously over the sea, in the hope of catching a glimpse of the little freshly-painted *Mary Jane*, with father's brown, good-natured face smiling from the stern. However, when by-and-by she came to one of the 'caves' which are to be seen on that coast, she thought it would be good to sit down awhile and rest. In she went, and settled herself on a piece of rock just low enough for her to reach. Fanny still looked steadily out to sea, meaning to be ready if the *Mary Jane* suddenly appeared; but somehow she grew sleepy, and the little head began to nod, and though she rubbed her eyes and tried to rouse up it was no use, and she slipped down upon the shining sand and went off in the sweetest dream that could be!

How long it lasted Fanny, of course, did not know, but she woke up fancying she had got her best Sunday shoes wet, and mother was scolding her. Ah! the little sly, quiet waves, which had been a long way off when she entered the cave, had really and truly crept up softly, and were wetting—not her Sunday shoes—but her poor, little, cold, bare feet.

She was too well used to the sea to be frightened, and she laughed and climbed a little higher, and then higher again when the next wave nearly caught her, and for a few minutes it seemed very good fun; but then Fanny remembered what had brought her out, and now if father passed she couldn't run to him, and if she called he wouldn't hear; and, surely, he would never be able to see such a little figure away back there amidst the rocks and stones of the cave! The smiles all died out then, and tears sprang to the

child's eyes, and it seemed in a moment as if the water had lost its prettiness, and it frightened her as it came up higher; and looking up at the big rock above her head, she thought it would be very dreadful to stop there long without father or mother. And, now! she was so hungry, and she had nothing to eat—not the hardest crust or tiniest crumb!

Meanwhile the *Mary Jane* had got safely in, and the fisherman's first cry after getting into the cottage and kissing his wife was, 'Where's little Fan?'

Then they found she was missing, and all the neighbours were questioned, and when the children said where they had seen the little maid, and that she told them she was looking for father, rough George Harding brushed the tears from his eyes, and exclaiming, 'Bless her heart! father'll look for her!' strode over the shingly beach towards Lulworth.

It did not take him as long as it had taken poor little Fanny's feet to reach the cave; and wasn't she glad when the dear brown face peeped round the rocks and a strong arm lifted her from her perch, and she was carried home, nestling close to the fisherman's heart, while ever and again as he waded through the water, or tramped along the sand and shingle, he would look down at his little burden and say, 'Bless her heart, then! so she went looking for father, and father had to come looking for her!'

F. S.

BRAVE BOUSSARD, THE FAMOUS PILOT OF DIEPPE.

(Continued from page 303.)



It seemed as if the noble pilot was destined not to reach his goal. He had only swam a very little way when the sea again hurled him back upon the shore. Five times, with unflinching valour, he repeated his attempts. At last, the fifth time, he succeeded. He reached the stranded vessel, and with a cry that sounded far and wide, even above the roar of the wind and waves, the perishing seamen greeted their heroic deliverer. But he was not yet on board the vessel. A wave threw him so violently against the ship that the crew uttered a shriek of terror, for they thought that their brave deliverer had been stunned by the shock and would certainly sink. One of the sailors from on board sprang into the sea to help him; but Boussard, marvellous to relate, was quite unhurt, while the sailor who had wished to save him was stunned by the fall, and would certainly have been drowned if the brave pilot had not seized him with his strong arm. He swam with him back to the shore, and brought him safely to dry land.

'Take care of him,' cried he, as, for the sixth time, he dashed into the sea.

His wife and children wept aloud. Surely his strength must be exhausted! Unless the Almighty God works a miracle without doubt he will perish, they thought.

God watched over the life of that noble man. The eye of the All-merciful had seen that love in Bous-sard's heart which made him ready to lay down his life for his brethren, and graciously protected him. He gave His angels charge over him, and He fulfilled His promise to the brave sailor, who, trusting in the help of his God, had thrown himself into the raging sea to save the lives of his brethren from death. 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.'

Boussard safely reached the wreck, the yards and tackling of which were already floating about, and which in a few minutes must go to pieces.

'God is my Protector!' he cried cheerfully.

To have saved one man was not enough to satisfy the brave, generous fellow; it had only made him the more eager to save the rest.

Six still remained on board the wreck. How would it be possible to rescue them all? His plan was formed, however. If the unfortunate men understood him, and the Almighty gave His blessing, then he would succeed in the project which he had planned during his struggle with the waves.

When he reached the cutter he threw his rope to the men, and they seized it.

With a loud voice, which sounded above the howling of the storm and the roaring of the sea, he called out to them, 'Hold it fast!' He quickly unwound it from his powerful frame; then grasping the end of the rope firmly, and throwing himself on a wave which was rolling in towards the shore, he allowed it to cast him on the strand, where a hundred arms were stretched out to drag him on shore.

On a signal-gun being fired from the land, the six men (who had fastened the rope to their bodies) sprang into the sea. A hundred arms dragged at the rope with all their strength. In a few moments they were all safe on shore: their dreadful death-struggle with the raging sea was fought out and over. With joy they threw themselves into each other's arms, forgetting all the danger which had just threatened them. Then they fell on their knees and with uplifted hands thanked the Almighty, Who had given His blessing to the generous efforts of their deliverer. But suddenly the steersman exclaimed, 'May God have mercy on the poor sick man still left on board!'

A silent thrill of horror passed through the crowd as they heard these words.

'What!' cried Boussard; 'a sick man on board your cutter? Where is he?'

The steersman, in a few words, described the place where he lay.

'Boussard!' cried his wife, in despair, as she clasped him in her arms, 'hast thou quite forgotten me and thy children? Wilt thou once more risk thy life after the merciful God has so narrowly saved thee? Dost thou no longer love us, that thou wilt rush into certain death? Thou hast done all that thou couldst; thy strength is exhausted. Thou canst never be so rash as to try again! Hundreds are standing around, who have done nothing yet; let them make an attempt.'

Her tears and entreaties were in vain.

'God is my Protector!' cried the noble Boussard.

'Pray to Him, and He will aid me again as He has hitherto done. I should not have a peaceful hour again all my life if that poor sick man should perish without my having made an attempt to rescue him.'

With these words he tore himself away from his wife and children, and the next moment saw him again borne on the crest of a wave far from the shore.

'This is nothing but fool-hardiness! it is tempting God!' cried some of his fellow-townsmen. 'He is lost! he must perish! he will never be able to keep up!' cried others. 'May God have mercy on the brave man!' said many, with hearty compassion. His wife and children knelt on the shore and clasped their hands in prayer, while tears of despairing grief flowed down their cheeks.

Every eye was strained to catch a glimpse of the brave fellow, who swam like a fish through the waves, using every billow which retreated from the shore as a means of carrying him out further into the sea, and thus gaining strength to battle with the next, which would have hurled him back on the beach.

It was now so dark that the wreck could scarcely be seen; but the lamp was kindled in the lighthouse and was casting its beams over the wild, raging sea.

And Boussard—where was he? how was he getting on? God's eye watched over him; His holy angel bore him up. With prudent forethought he swam to the windward side of the wreck. From thence much tackling was hanging down. With his strong arm he seized one of the ropes, and by its aid clambered up on to the deck, where the waves had already washed everything away. The water, too, had risen high into the hold.

As he descended the hatchway the sick man stretched out his arms to him and cried, with a faint voice, 'Oh! save me! save me!'

'God be praised!' exclaimed Boussard, as his heart swelled with joy to find the poor man still alive. He hoped now that he should be able to save the last one; but there was not a moment to be lost. The ship groaned and trembled, the waves were dashing furiously against it on all sides. At every fresh blow it threatened to sink, and then they would both be lost. Boussard seized the sick man, drew him out of the cabin on to the deck, and here quickly cut off a strong rope. With this he bound the helpless man to a beam of timber, then grasping firm hold of him, he pushed him into the sea, just at the moment when a huge wave was rolling in towards the shore.

The sick man had just strength to keep himself upright enough to be able to breathe. Now Boussard managed to push the beam before him; then swam beside it till a second wave, rolling onwards, threw both the timber with the sick man on it as well as his deliverer on the strand. The grand and heroic deed had, by God's mercy, been successful.

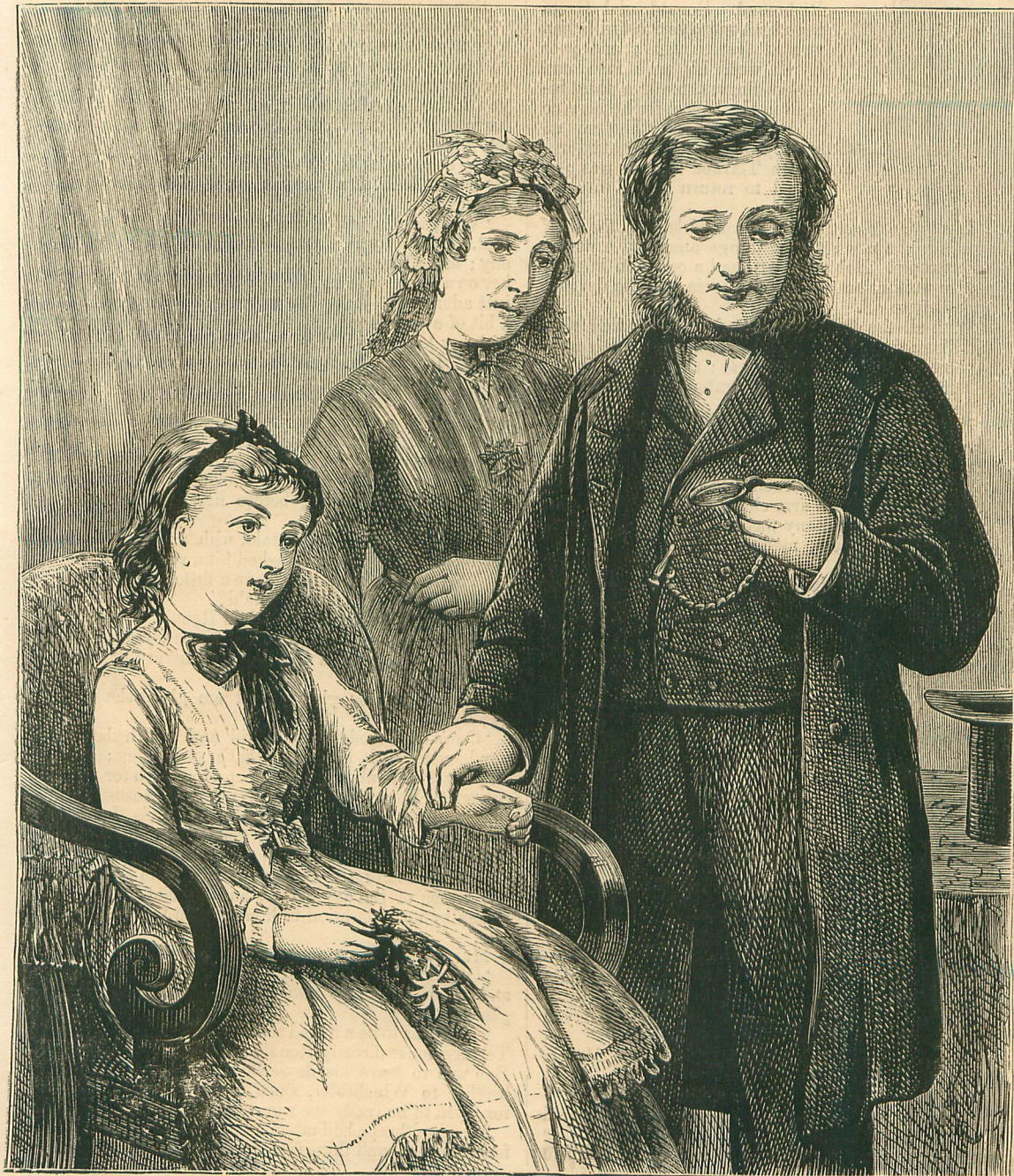
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"Oh! save me! save me!" cried the sick man.

Chatterbox.

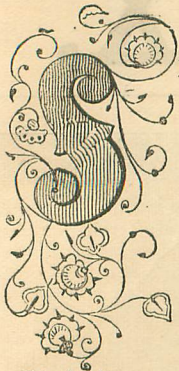


The Doctor paying Marcia a special visit.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Continued from page 308.)

CHAPTER XI.



IX weeks of doctors and nurses, confinement and suffering, followed the disastrous day at Richmond. Ronald and Greta were both more seriously ill than was at first thought; and poor Cyril, with his pale face and useless fingers, made a third invalid in the house, for he became so restless at Northholme on hearing of the accident at Mornington Terrace that he was permitted to return home with his father.

Lively Greta and restless Ronald laid on the shelf was indeed a new state of things among the young Tredthorpes. Bob and Cyril had a common interest now in waiting on them, and Marcia was the devoted attendant on all.

With all the temptations to fretfulness that pain and discomfort created, there was seldom any bickering now among the young people; they were learning in truth the happiness and comfort of bearing and forbearing.

It was of no use being cross to Marcia, they said, when she was never cross in return; and Marcia's example was a guide to the rest. She was the moving spirit of the invalids' room—the old schoolroom, largely provided with arm-chairs and sofas; and her Indian stories, and many ways of occupying herself and amusing others, made her invaluable at this time.

Ronald now made large demands on his little cousin's services, and fully recognised her, not only as a companion and friend, but as something better and holier than himself. It made one feel queer and Sunday-like, he said, talking to Marcia. And yet there was no gravity or melancholy about the little girl. She was not, it is true, very strong, but she was gay and merry in her own quiet way. The necessity for keeping up cheerfulness around the invalids had roused her out of her dreaminess into an unusual activity.

Mrs. Tredthorpe was pleased to think that her little niece was likely to be able to benefit by the course of lessons when once Miss Milward could resume her reign and the boys were sent back to school.

Ronald was already in a hurry to be off: he was an ambitious boy, and unwilling to lose his place in the class.

He was telling Marcia all his designs for promotion in his school one evening, when he suddenly stopped, and looking at her, exclaimed,—

'I say, Martie, whatever makes every one tell you everything?'

The question was not well expressed, but Marcia smiled and said,—

'I suppose because I like to hear everything.'

'Yes, but it seems so odd a fellow like me should look to a bit of a thing like you to say if a thing seems right or wrong; but I do,' said Ronald, half to

himself. 'Wherever did you learn to see things so straightforward, Marcia? you never seem to doubt or hesitate, like Bob or Greta, but all in a minute you guess the right and do it.'

'I think I learnt it at home,' said Marcia; 'and now I am away I try harder than ever to do as they wish there.'

Ronald pondered a little, and then declared,—

'Marcia, you are a bit of a thing, but you have made a great difference in this house. We shan't ever want you to go back to India. Do you know, I can never use that crib I was so contented with last half since you looked so solemn over it. I never thought any harm of it till then. And Bob, he really works now a bit, and doesn't pay that horrid young Briggs to do his sums, because he says you say it's worse than lying.'

'Oh, indeed, I never said quite that!' broke in Marcia.

'Well, all the same,' continued Ronald, 'it meant that. As to Cyril, poor fellow, he is after you all day; and Greta's not half so tiresome about having her own way as she used to be; and Prince and Prue just adore you. I wonder why they all like you so—a bit of a pale-faced mite, whose hand I could crush with my lame one! I suppose it is because you are good. I never believed in good people before—I thought they were only in books—but I do now. You needn't mind, or get red: it's not you I am praising, only your goodness;' and Ronald leaned back in his chair, to take a long look at the little Indian cousin.

She was sitting very quiet and thoughtful before him, her bit of knitting before her, but her hands still.

She looked back at Ronald, with no confusion in her face at his praise, and asked him, softly,—

'Then you think I have done a little good since I came to England, cousin Ronald?'

'A little? An awful lot!' said Ronald, decidedly.

'Ask mother, ask Rachel, ask Bob and Cyril.'

But Marcia seemed thoroughly content and satisfied.

'Mother will be glad, and I am glad,' she said, quietly.

'One's ashamed to be horrid and selfish before you,' continued Ronald, 'that's one thing; and another is you always go so deep or so high for your reasons. You don't just enjoy yourself because it is fun; and yet it all comes so easily, Marcia, I think you have got the real bit of good grain inside you, and no thorns to choke it.'

The parable of the Sower had come into the Sunday lesson of the day before, and Ronald had been struck by its application to himself and those around him.

Marcia waited a moment and then whispered,—

'Oh, Ronald, thank you! I'm glad you think so; and then she crept away, her face shining with gladness.

There was to be a grand turn-out of the Mornington Terrace house directly Ronald returned to school, and Bob was to leave his day-school and accompany his brother to Winchester, since it was useless waiting for Cyril to be ready for work.

Mr. Tredthorpe had taken a house at St. Leonard's for six weeks, and there Greta and Cyril, Marcia and

the little ones, were to enjoy thorough freedom from lessons for some time. Miss Milward, it is true, went with the party, but more as a kind of companion in their walks and pleasures than as a governess.

Just before leaving London Marcia had not been very well, and the doctor who attended the family had paid a special visit to her, but, somewhat to her relief, had given her no such disagreeable medicines as Greta had had to take of late. So the little girl fancied herself well, or at least only rather weak, as often happened. She did not know what an anxious letter went out to India by that mail, nor how languid, unexcitable Mrs. Tredthorpe, cried over the writing of it. Marcia thought every one was very kind to her at St. Leonard's, from Uncle Tredthorpe, who was always meeting her on the sands and asking her if she felt tired, to Greta, who would no longer let her wait on her as she had done since the accident, but insisted, instead, on running all Marcia's errands, carrying her story-book to the sheltered nooks on the shore for her, and divining her wishes in every way. And then, one day, came a most wonderful telegram to the house. Marcia herself happened to be the person into whose hands the red-capped boy put the yellow envelope, and she it was who carried it to Uncle Tredthorpe, since it was addressed to him. He opened it, read it, and then he said to Marcia,—
‘Go, dear, and tell your aunt I am coming to talk to her.’

Marcia left the message at her aunt's door and then went out on the sands that sunny spring morning. There a little later her uncle found her with Greta. He sat down and drew her towards him.

‘Marcia,’ he said, ‘are you happy with us now?’

Marcia smiled, and putting an arm round the kind uncle's neck seemed to think the question required no further answer.

‘Do you ever want to go home to mother, and Dick, and father?’ continued Uncle Tredthorpe.

‘When the time comes,’ said Marcia, quietly.

Somehow the little girl could not be excited, it seemed, though Greta by this time was standing by with wide-open eyes, wondering why father asked such strange questions of cousin Marcia, when he knew she had to wait five long years before that home-going, and she was not to be encouraged to long for it.

‘But would you like to go home sooner?’ persisted Uncle Tredthorpe.

‘Am I ready—am I fit for it?’ asked Marcia. ‘I must not go till then,’ she answered, rather troubled.

Mr. Tredthorpe took the yellow envelope from his pocket and all at once the truth flashed on Marcia.

‘They have sent for me!’ she said, her face all one glow of happiness.

‘Yes, dear, they have sent for you,’ said her uncle gently. ‘I have had a telegram, as you know; it is to say that Colonel and Mrs. Burns, friends of your father's, are going back to India next month, and will take charge of you. Your mother wants you with her again,—she cannot wait five years more for her little girl.’

‘I am going home, Greta!’ said Marcia, her little face, beaming, her eyes sparkling—‘going home!’

(Concluded in our next.)

ABOUT WATCHES.

ALWAYS wind up a watch at the same time every day, and be very careful that no dirt is contained in the barrel of the key. A watch should be always in the same position, and when carried in the pocket by day it should be hung up at night. When you regulate a watch, as you move the regulator towards the parts marked ‘fast’ or ‘slow,’ take care you do not move it too much at a time: it is better to move it a little every day, until the watch goes right, than to move it too much at once. Also be careful that no dirt is contained in your watch-pocket, otherwise it may gain admission into the inside of the watch, and impair its action. It is advisable, when wearing a watch, to keep it in a soft wash-leather bag made for that purpose, by which means the watch is prevented from being scratched or injured by friction against the rough lining of the pocket. When the key-holes for winding and setting a watch are situated at the back of a case, never open the front, since by doing so you may not only admit dirt and moisture, but also may dislodge the glass, and perhaps break it. If your watch is a chronometer, or has a duplex movement, when setting it to the correct time always remember to move the hands forwards, and never backwards. Although this is not of so much importance in watches of other construction, yet it is advisable to do it in all cases. Lastly, care should be taken to keep a watch always as nearly as possible at the same temperature, otherwise it will never keep correct time.—*Cassell's Household Guide.*

HAVE PITY!

I KNOW a dirty by-street,
Close by a dirty town,
Where you see the dirty people
Go walking up and down.

And in this dirty by-street
They have no lovely spring,
They cannot see the summer sun,
Nor hear the wood-birds sing.

And when the dreary night comes on
They cannot go to bed;
They have no bed to lie upon,
Nor rest their weary head.

The children cannot go to school,
There is no school for them:
They cannot learn to read or write,
Nor learn to sew and hem.

I see an angry woman
Beating a little child,
With its frock all torn and ragged,
And its hair all rough and wild.

And in those little dingy rooms
They have no fire or light,
To cheer them in the morning,
To cheer them in the night.

Then let us try to help them,
And let us love, and pity
The people of the by-street,
Close by the noisy city.

K. W. J., aged nine.



Autumn. By W. H. Boot.

AUTUMN SONG.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX.'



Copyright.

GOLDEN Autumn! happy time,
Joy of every heart and clime,
Yellow corn and purple plum
Tell us truly thou art come;
Hail! dear nurse of all that's born,
Autumn with the brimming horn.

Spell-bound now the thunder sleeps,
As the hopeful toiler reaps:
Blast and torrent, safely sealed,
May not harm thy sacred field;
Calm thy night is—bright thy morn,
Autumn with the brimming horn.

Honour to the sweating brow!
Shame on him who loiters now!
Seize the sickle—shake the tree—
We will make the most of thee,
Lest we pine in want forlorn,
Autumn with the brimming horn!

G. S. O.

INDUSTRY AND IDLENESS.



WASP met a Bee on his travels one day,
And he paused for a moment, good morning
to say;

Then added, 'I wish you would tell me, my dear,
Why people regard me with horror and fear!

Ah! you need not look sorry and shake your wise
head,

You know that my presence is greeted with dread;
If I buzz round the windows the ladies will cry,
And the children all shout, "O that *wasp*! it must die!"

Deliberate murder is stamped on each face,
And really for *me* there is no resting-place;

'Tis surely no wonder your family thrive,
When men all stand ready to build you a hive.

I do not make honey for others to sell,
But I eat it and like it, you know very well;
We resemble each other—although it is true
That I have more gold round my person than you.

We speak the same language, we sing the same song,
Though your body is stout while mine is quite long;
And my waist is more taper, my clothes *such* a fit,
While my sting is much stronger, as you will admit!"

'Oh! that is the trouble,' then answered the Bee,
'And makes a vast difference between you and me;
I'm busy all day, and so keep on the wing,
That in laying up sweets forget I can sting.

For clothes that are fine and for jewelry rare,
I have not the time to arrange, I declare:
And I frankly confess that I am in such haste,
I never once think of the size of my waist.

I like to be useful, for I've understood
That even an insect is here for some good:
You'll own, my dear friend, there is great satisfaction
In leading a life of industrious action.'

'Good-bye,' said the Wasp, as he turned up his nose,
And buried himself in the heart of a rose;
'I'd take your advice, I am sure, if I could,
But it's late in the day for a *wasp* to be good!

The moral, I think, little children, is clear—
If you wish to be happy, be useful while here;
Take care of the moments, for swiftly they go,
And you must be storing up honey, you know.

M. R. H.

BRAVE BOUSSARD, THE FAMOUS
PILOT OF DIEPPE.

(Concluded from page 311.)



HE anxious and excited people had
lighted many lanterns, which
gleamed everywhere along the
shore, and now the cry arose,
'There is Boussard!' Strong
arms drew him up into safety,
and unbound the sick man.

'Quick with him to the hos-
pital!' cried Boussard, as he sank
down exhausted.

Shouts of rejoicing now sounded
from the pier, and soon throughout the whole town

of Dieppe. The wife and children of the brave pilot
embraced the husband and father whom God in His
mercy had restored to them. With deepest gratitude
the rescued sailors surrounded the man who had
saved them from certain death.

His strength, kept up by the extreme excitement,
had lasted till his noble work was completed. Now
it suddenly gave way—he fell fainting into the arms
of his wife.

'Oh, my God! he is dying!' cried the agonized
woman: and the children wept as if their hearts
would break round their beloved father.

A surgeon was quickly at hand. 'Be comforted,
good woman,' said he; 'it is only a fainting fit.'

They bathed his forehead, poured a few drops of
wine into his mouth, and he soon opened his eyes,
and said, with a smile, to his wife, 'Don't be uneasy,
dearest Madeleine! thy Boussard is not dying.'

Sailors bore the brave pilot in their arms to the
nearest inn, where he obtained some refreshment.
The surgeon who accompanied him had no little
trouble to defend him from the proofs of love and
gratitude which well-nigh overwhelmed him.

'My good Boussard,' said the kind man, 'you need
rest: come, I will go with you to your home.'

'Thank you, sir,' replied Boussard; 'but first, if
you will be so kind, come with me to the hospital,
that I may see how they are all getting on, especially
the sick man.'

It was a real triumphal procession to the hospital,
where the state of the sick man demanded a rest
which it was scarcely possible for the authorities to
obtain for him. The surgeon alone accompanied
Boussard into the room where all the shipwrecked
sailors were assembled. They were as well as could
be expected under the circumstances, and the sick
man was apparently better.

Oh, what tears of gratitude flowed when Boussard
entered the apartment! He and the surgeon wept
with the rescued. Boussard directed them to look
above, to the Almighty and gracious God, Who, by
the blessing He had granted, had been the real
and only Author of his success.

'I have been only God's instrument,' said the
modest, noble, and pious seaman; 'but that I should
have been allowed to be it, for that shall my soul
praise and glorify Him for ever!'

The inhabitants of Dieppe testified their satisfac-
tion of their brave fellow-citizen by oft-repeated
praises, but the brave deed of the noble pilot became
known very soon beyond the limits of his native
town, and the fame of it soon spread throughout
France. Letters of praise—some containing rich
presents of money, which were very acceptable as
Boussard was poor—came to him from all parts.

M. de Crosne, Intendant of Rouen, informed the
Minister of Finance, M. Necker, of Boussard's brave
action; M. Necker acquainted the king (the good
Louis XVI.) with the fact; and immediately on
receiving his Majesty's orders wrote himself the fol-
lowing letter to the Pilot of Dieppe:—

'BRAVE MAN,

'I only heard yesterday, through M. l'Inten-
dant, of the courageous action which you performed
on the 31st August last, and yesterday I informed

the king of it, who commanded me to testify to you his satisfaction for the same, and to announce to you from him that he makes you a present of 1000 francs, and grants you a pension of 300 francs. Continue to help others whenever you can, and pray for your good king, who loves brave men and rewards them.

‘NECKER.

‘General Director of Finance.

‘Paris, 20th December, 1777.’

The contents of this letter soon became public at Dieppe. To the brave pilot it caused great joy, and he took care that it should be preserved as a precious heirloom in his family. The money which he received from all sides he employed to clothe his children better than his former needy circumstances had allowed him to do; moreover, he took two little orphan nieces into his house, and educated them with his own children. Another good use which he made of his money is best shown by quoting his own words: ‘During my poverty, it was always my greatest grief that I could not buy ropes and cords to save ships which were in danger. I always found a difficulty in borrowing them from others. In such cases they were sometimes broken or lost: I was then quite afraid to meet those who had lent them to me, because I had no money to replace them.’

His fellow-townsmen came to congratulate him on the king's favour, and urged him to go to Paris to present himself to Louis XVI., to express his gratitude to his Majesty.

Boussard at last yielded to their wishes. He went to Versailles, where the king received him with great kindness, and repeated, with deep feeling, ‘There is a brave man! really a brave man!’ Boussard, who only saw in the deed he had performed the duty of one man towards others, was astonished at the reward with which the prince had honoured him. ‘I have done,’ he said, ‘many actions like this one; I don't know why my last should make so much noise. My comrades, too, are as brave as I am.’

The brave man, faithful to the duties which he had imposed upon himself, continued still to watch the harbour and piers of Dieppe. The king had appointed him overseer of the lighthouse, and, besides, had caused a little house to be built for him close to the harbour, from which he had a view over the sea, and could at once perceive if a ship was in danger.

At the least appearance of a storm, or of any vessel in distress, Boussard, provided with ropes, would dash into the waves, and then steer the vessel into the harbour. If the fury of the sea was too great to allow him to steer the ship into safety, he seized the sailors or passengers and bore them to the shore.

In the course of the autumn of 1786 brave Boussard perceived in the middle of the night that a barque was foundering at a little distance from the piers. Attracted by the cries of the unhappy crew, who were struggling in the waves, he threw ropes to them, and called to his help all those who were within hearing on the shore. The darkness was so great that he could not see those who were in danger. Boussard's son was among the six shipwrecked men. He was skilful enough to get hold of a rope which

would quickly have helped him to the pier, but perceiving by his side an unfortunate lad of fourteen, whose strength was already exhausted, and who was allowing himself to be borne away by the waves, as a worthy son of the brave man he resolved, at the risk of his own life, to save him from danger. To succeed in this with greater certainty he passed the end of the rope under the lad's arms and then round his own thighs. This double burden caused it to break. A cry from the man on the pier who held the rope warned Boussard the elder of this accident: he promptly threw out another rope, which his son seized.

This intrepid young man was determined not to abandon the boy whom he had taken under his protection: he tied him again with a second rope, and was fortunate enough by the aid of his father in being able, thus bound as he was, to climb up to the jetty, more than eighteen feet above the sea.

Three others were at the same time rescued from the waves by the aid of Boussard's ropes.

Let us not omit to mention one of the fine traits of the sensitive soul of the brave man. Boussard thought less on this occasion of the rescue of the five shipwrecked men, among whom was his own son, than of the death of the sixth; and his friend had a great deal of trouble to console him for a loss for which in some way he reproached himself.

This was not the first noble deed of the younger Boussard, who associated himself henceforth with his father's glory, for in 1784 he had already saved the lives of four shipwrecked men. M. de Crosne, Intendant of Rouen, sent him a reward of 400 francs, and the Chamber of Commerce added to it a silver medal, as they had previously given a gold one to his father.

Since that day Boussard's descendants have always been watchmen at the Dieppe Lighthouse. Scarcely a year has passed in which some one of them has not distinguished himself in saving a vessel or human lives.

On the parapet of the pier stands a post, firmly planted in the rock and plated with copper. To this post a chain is fixed. Since 1777, in every storm by day or night a Boussard is lashed to this post. From hence he calls out, through his speaking-trumpet, his warnings and directions to the sailors who have to struggle with the storm and waves. And though sometimes the waves dash high over his head, the next moment the faithful watchman appears again, and his voice sounds above the roar of the storm and the raging of the sea. Since 1777 the townsmen of Dieppe inquire, when a ship or a man is to be saved, ‘Is there no Boussard there?’ And, as yet, one has never failed. Nearly a century, therefore, has the race of the faithful pilot endured.

May his memory still be blessed, and may his posterity long continue to add honour to the name they bear by their brave deeds!

J. F. C.





The King receiving Boussard.

Chatterbox.



The Pigs swimming across the river.



A STORY ABOUT TWO PIGS.

WE are apt to class pigs among the least intelligent of all our animals, and it is certain that they are particularly awkward and troublesome travellers; but a curious circumstance, which happened in our own neighbourhood nearly forty years ago, seems to prove that, if left to themselves, pigs can be as clever as we know dogs and horses and several other creatures have often shown themselves, in finding their way home under more or less difficulty.

A gentleman, residing at Caversham, bought two pigs in Reading Market, which were conveyed to his house in a sack, and turned into his yard, near the banks of the river Thames. The next morning the pigs were missing: a hue and cry was raised, and towards the afternoon a person gave information that two pigs had been seen swimming across the river, at nearly its broadest part. They were afterwards observed trotting along the Pangbourn road. The result was their safe return to the place from whence they had been conveyed to Reading, a distance of nine miles, and by cross-roads. The farmer from whom they had been purchased brought them back to their owner, but they took the first opportunity to escape again, re-crossed the water, and never stopped till they found themselves at their first home. How the matter was afterwards settled we cannot say, but the case was thought so remarkable, especially by some neighbours who took great interest in the study of animals and their capacities, that it excited full and particular inquiry and investigation at the time, and the truth of the above facts may therefore be relied upon.—*Sonning Parish Magazine.*

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

A.D. 1714.

CHAPTER I.



Y name is Millicent Alleyn, and I live with my brother John, who hath been Rector of Herdington these thirty years past; ever since the time when King James still reigned.

We have lived through many changes, but it is not of great events in the kingdom that I am writing: I will but tell the simple story of that which fell out under my own eyes.

It is two years ago this summer since I took my journey to London, that I might fetch home our niece, Sylvia Lennox, to dwell with us.

She was the orphan child of poor sister Dolly, and since her mother's death had lived with her grandmother, my Lady Betty Lennox, a person of quality,

who was too fine to have any commerce with such plain country-folks as John and myself. So it happened that we had not seen Sylvia for years, and had but rarely received from her some formal note or message; when one day we were startled to have a real, honest letter from her, all blistered with tears, saying that my Lady Betty was dangerously ill, and the doctors did not give her long to live.

'The poor child!' said my brother John, in his gentle, quiet way. 'What will become of her when Lady Betty is gone?'

'No doubt some of her father's grand kinsfolk will take Sylvia then,' I replied, with a little sharpness, for I had never quite forgiven her neglect of us all these years.

John was silent for a few minutes, and when he spoke again it was in an earnest tone.

'Nay, Millicent, we must not forget that she is our poor sister Dolly's little girl. There are none so nigh of kin to her as ourselves, and we should give her a home if she needs one.'

'And how do you think a town-bred Miss of seventeen will like to bury herself in this quiet, rustic spot? You know a great deal about books, John, but you don't know much about girls and their fancies.'

He only smiled and made no answer, but I could see that my words had not changed his mind.

All that day, as I went about my household duties, my thoughts turned much towards Sylvia. I had seen her last as a bright, rosy child, when she had been brought to pay us a visit by her old nurse. I remembered well how she had made the old walls resound with her merry laughter, as she ran all over the house, peeping into every nook and corner with a child's eager curiosity. It had seemed to give a new charm to the home where John and I lived our calm, quiet lives.

And as I thought of that almost forgotten childish visit, I wondered how it would be if ever our Dolly's little maid should come to dwell with us! Truly, it would be 'something young about the house,' as old Abigail had said once, when she pleaded for leave to keep the kittens.

But my thoughts were soon called back to the present, by the news that a messenger had arrived post haste from London, and would speak with me at once, as the master was not within.

I hurried down the stone passage towards the kitchen, more troubled and excited than I had been for many a day. The news was soon told: my Lady Betty Lennox had died quite suddenly at the last, and Sylvia had sent off at once to pray that I would go to her without delay.

'She do seem all deserted like, do Mistress Sylvia, poor young thing!' added the man, who looked like an old trusty servant.

'Is she alone, then?' I asked; but the next moment I repented of my question, for the maids had now gathered round us full of curiosity and sympathy.

'Nay, madam,' he answered, with a shake of the head; 'but maybe it would be better for young mistress if she were.'

I made no more inquiries, but with all haste did begin to prepare for my journey. All the household was astir at the thought of it, for we were quiet, home-staying folk, not given to gadding about.

My maid, Phoebe, comes running to the oak press, and fetches out my best gown of olive brocade, done about with lace; but I bade her put it by, for, as I told her, 'it was not seemly to go to the house of mourning in holiday attire. I would wear a sad-coloured gown, and she must put a black ribbon in my cap.'

Then I went to seek for John, who was out in the glebe meadow, watching the hay-making. When he heard my news he said,—

'You will go at once, Millicent? Yes, I was sure of it. By good luck, too, we have not yet begun to carry the hay, so you can have the horses, though I can but ill spare Timothy.'

'Yet you would not expect me to ride behind any one else than Timothy, unless you will come yourself, John?' I said, half in jest, for my brother was one who never left home, be it for business or pleasure, from one year's end to another.

'No, no, Millicent,' he replied with a smile; 'you're woman enough to do without me. Will you take your maid with you?'

'Surely not! Why, it would turn poor Phoebe's silly head to make a journey to London, and she'd give herself airs ever after. Good old Abigail might be some comfort to me; but if she goes, how are we to bring Sylvia back? for, if I am not much mistaken, that's the meaning of her sending for me.'

'I will tell you, Millicent: I have a new thought,' cried John, as we reached the garden-porch. 'You shall take Abigail. She can ride behind that decent serving-man of Lady Lennox; he brought a good strong animal, which will be well rested by morning. Then Timothy can ride back, and you women hire a hackney-coach; little Sylvia may be timid of riding pillion along our country roads?'

And so in the early summer morning, when the grass was thick with dew, and the birds whistled around us, we set off on our journey.

As we came across one wild, dreary part of Hounslow Heath, Timothy must needs tell tales of highwaymen and their bold deeds to the townsmen, till poor Abigail quite shook in her saddle. Doubtless it was a perilous journey, but more so by night than by day. However, by the goodness of Providence we reached town in safety.

It was nigh upon ten years since last I had paid a visit to London, when Lady Coppinger, our neighbour at Herdington Manor, would not take nay, but must have me go with them to see Queen Anne's coronation. And to think that here I was again, in the noisy, crowded streets, with all the folk staring and well-nigh laughing at us, as though they had never seen a lady on horseback before!

Lady Lennox's serving-man would have had us get down and take a sedan-chair through the fashionable quarter, but I was not minded to try their town ways; and at last we reached our journey's end, and pulled up before a fine big house in the Bloomsbury Square, as they called it.

All the blinds were pulled down, and it looked very grim and desolate; but before I had time to dismount from the pillion a fair young face looked out through the open door, and I had scarcely entered the hall ere Sylvia had thrown her arms round my neck, sobbing out,—

'Dear Aunt Millicent! it was good of you to come to me!'

Then she took me up the great dark staircase—up and up, till I thought we should never reach the top—to her own little room, where she took off my hood and travelling cloak, and made me sit down, while she took a low stool by me, and buried her face on my knees, sobbing still, as though her heart would break.

I tried to soothe and comfort the poor girl, and after awhile she grew more calm.

'I never shed a tear till you came, Aunt Millicent. I was too wretched and forlorn. But the sight of your dear, kind face, loosed the tears, and—and I am better for them!'

'Poor Sylvia!' I said, kissing her pale face. 'It must indeed be a sad loss for you. Yet when I saw somewhat of Lady Betty years ago, in your poor mother's time, she seemed so cold and stately that I felt tempted to fear rather than love her.'

'I think she had a liking for me, in her own way,' said Sylvia, in a low voice. 'She meant it all for my good, I doubt not; but, oh, how I used to tremble sometimes at the sound of my grandmother's voice! How many a sharp blow have I had from the long handle of her fan; and neither I nor Mistress Anne ever dared sit down without leave in her presence.'

Presently Sylvia spoke again in a pleading tone,—

'Will you think me very wicked, Aunt Millicent, when I tell you that I fear my grief is most part for myself, and what is to become of me? If you only knew Mistress Anne! And this house and everything is hers now!'

'Your Aunt Lennox, you mean?' I asked.

'Oh, never call her my aunt!' cried Sylvia. 'She was my father's sister, I know, to my sorrow; for she has never failed to speak of him as the black sheep of their family, and to tell me that drink and cards ruined and killed him! Oh, she has a cruel, bitter tongue! She was jealous of Lady Betty's liking for me, and she would often say I should never have the air of anything but a country wench—one of the low, common sort, like my poor mother!'

'Did she dare to say so of my sister Dolly?' I asked, in wrath; 'of the sweetest, gentlest lady that ever breathed, though she would have her wilful way in marrying Captain Lennox?—'

At this moment old Abigail came in with a dish of tea and some sweet cake; and it was well she did, for else in my anger, maybe, I might have been led on to say that which was not seemly before the girl, my niece, of all the Lennox family, persons of quality though they be.

Ah, it was an ill day for us when first they crossed our path!

Abigail, too, was full of her troubles. It seemed that Mistress Anne Lennox had caught sight of her, and hearing whence she came, had called her a 'prying jade,' and bade her go about her business.

But the old servant had stood her ground bravely. 'I told her, forsooth,' said Abigail, 'that I bided not for her pleasure, but for yours, Mistress Millicent. And I cried shame on her raising strife afore even her dead mother was carried out!'

Thereupon a sudden thought struck me.



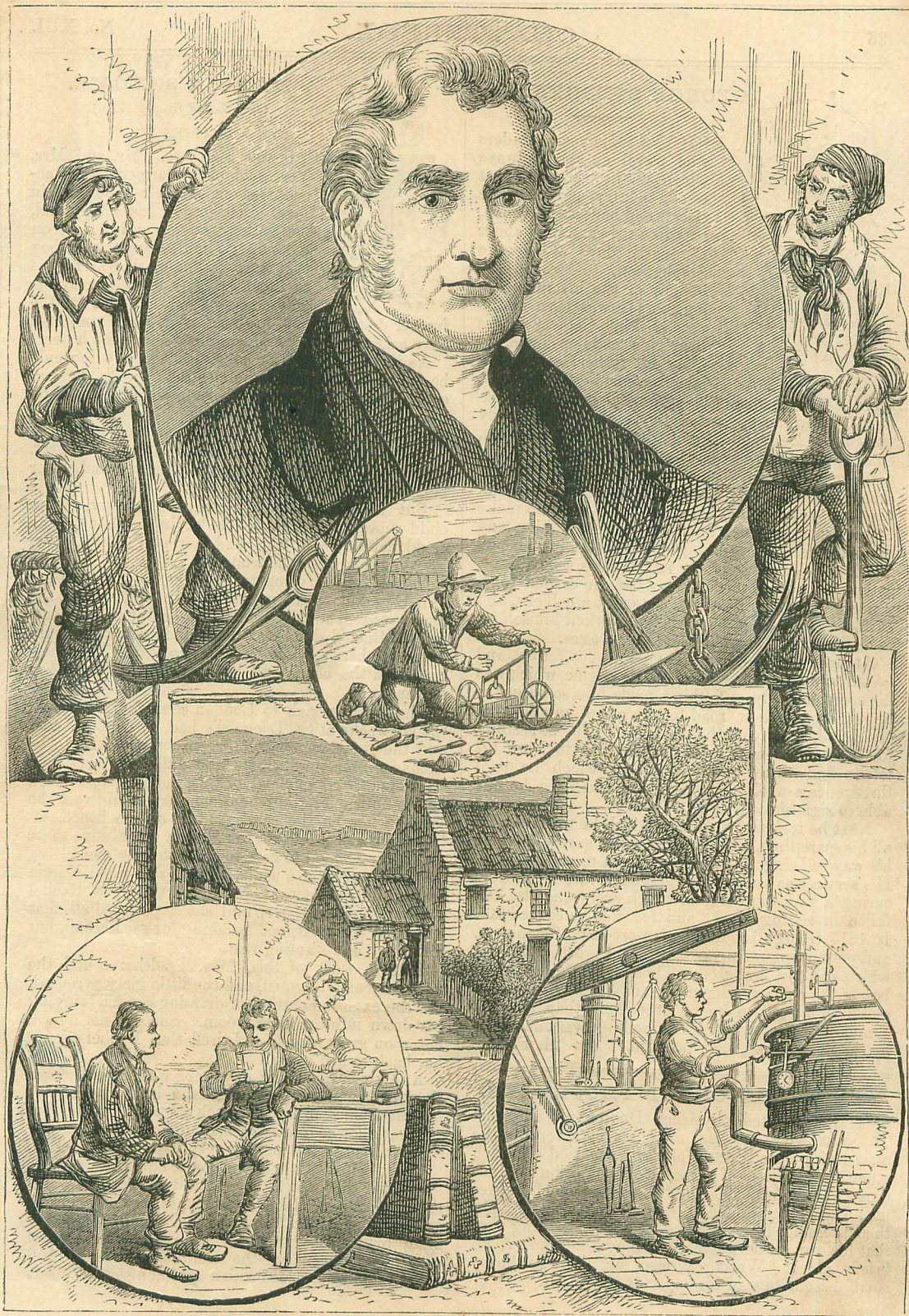
'Sylvia,' I said, 'your Uncle Alleyn has bid me come and fetch you home to dwell with us, if you are content to make choice of a simple rustic life.'

I waited for an answer. The girl's pale cheeks flushed to a rosy red, and she clasped and kissed my hand. She could not speak for joy. That was answer enough.

'Then make ready quickly, my child,' I cried. 'We will set off home at once—this very hour—for the days are long now, and we can reach Herdington

ere it be dark. Not another night shall you rest under this roof. As for me, I would as lief sleep on the doorstep as in this fine house with never a welcome. Abigail, you will give all diligence to help Mistress Sylvia put together her garments, while I seek Mistress Anne and bid her farewell. It shall not be said that we stole away like thieves; and, for my part, I never feared to meet the face of man or woman either.'

(To be continued.)



George Stephenson.

GEORGE STEPHENSON.



PERHAPS some young readers who travel on the railways which run through every part of our country, and under the streets and houses in London, may like to hear a little about the early days of George Stephenson, to whom the honour of the invention belongs. He was born in the year 1781 in a Colliery village near Newcastle-on-Tyne.

As his father was only a labourer earning 12s. a-week, there was no chance of George receiving any education. When the boy was eight years old the family moved to Denbyburn, and there, to his delight, George was made cow-boy to a neighbouring farmer, earning twopence a-week as wages. But he still found time for making tiny mills in the streams which ran into Denby bog; but, best of all, he loved to make clay engines, in which another boy helped him, and this was the first beginning of the modelling in clay which he became so clever in. George's next occupation was hoeing turnips, by which he earned fourpence a-day; then he was taken on at a colliery, and at fourteen years of age he had worked himself up to be fireman, with a shilling a-day wages.

At seventeen he had risen above his father, and began to master the working of his engine, which was his constant study. Nothing made him so happy as to get some one to read to him out of any book he could find, and from the desire and hope of reading for himself he went to a night-school to learn his letters and write 'pot-hooks,' for which he paid threepence a-week, and was very proud when he was able to sign his own name.

Next he took to 'figuring,' which he worked at in all his spare time, and thus slowly but surely he made his way to being something above a mere workman. His services as an engineer first came into request by curing a 'wheezy' engine which every one else had failed in setting right, and for this he earned 10*l*. In 1815 George produced a safety-lamp for miners, and put an engine upon the Killingworth Railway, which was the first used. Thus the little untaught boy of the colliery village worked his way to wealth and a high position by no other help than his own genius and perseverance, triumphing over difficulties by the power of a steady purpose. M. F. S.

THE THREE GREAT PHYSICIANS.

THE celebrated physician Dumoulin, being surrounded at his last moments by several of the most distinguished doctors of Paris, who vied with each other in expressions of regret at his condition: 'Gentlemen,' said he, suddenly, 'do not so much regret me: I leave behind me three great physicians.' On their pressing him to name them, each being sure that his own name would be among the number, he briefly added, 'Water, exercise, and diet,' to the no small discomfiture of his expectant brethren.

MARCIA'S HOME.

(Concluded from p. 315.)

CHAPTER XII.



YES, it was really so. Mr. and Mrs. Vere had been alarmed by the account given of their little girl in Mrs. Tredthorpe's last letter, and, not without advice and counsel on the subject, had telegraphed to beg that their darling might be returned to them. Home was evidently the only place for her, and but for the further delay it would have involved, Mr. Vere would have asked for leave and come himself to fetch her.

As it was, Colonel Burns with his kind wife would be the best escort with whom to send the child; and so Marcia had but a few weeks in which to dwell on the strange delight of rejoining her parents and going home before she must start on the journey.

Greta was loud in her exclamations of regret. How could she get on alone now, she asked, after being used to Marcia for so long?

But Marcia could only smile in answer. The child moved about in a sort of happy dream; she could neither work, nor read, nor play at this time; her thoughts were all at home.

When Rachel came to beg her to put aside her own toys and books preparatory to packing for the long voyage, she only smiled and said it did not matter, till Rachel shook her head and took affairs into her own hands, while Marcia crept to her sunny corner on the beach and lay there thinking out her happiness.

The journey back to London came first, however; the six weeks at St. Leonard's had come to an end, and the quiet shore and green country had to be exchanged for busy streets and dull lines of houses. Greta loudly complained of this, but Marcia seemed not to notice it; the schoolroom arm-chair was the same to her as the sandy corner of the beach—at least Greta declared so, for Marcia was always there and never seemed to care to speak to any one.

And then, after a while, came a day when Marcia seemed to be asleep at getting-up time, and Rachel would not disturb her, and she lay in bed all that day, and the next, not speaking, or seeming ill, but only quiet and wanting rest.

After a week of this, Mrs. Tredthorpe and the doctor became alarmed, and the little girl was roused, and the experiment tried of dressing her and bringing her down into the schoolroom. She did not object, but soon grew so pale and tired that Rachel carried her back to bed again.

And then, for a few days, she was dressed for a short time and brought downstairs in the same way; but she seemed to lose so much strength by this, that she was allowed to stay in bed altogether, as was her wish, where she lay looking very happy and peaceful.

They talked to her about home, and Dick, and the great ship that was fitting out to take her there, and the preparations Rachel was making for her comfort on board; and Mrs. Tredthorpe had already in her mind made the great sacrifice of sending Rachel with her little niece—the child was too weak and ailing to go unprovided with a special attendant. But

nothing seemed to excite Marcia; she often smiled and murmured 'Thank you,' when occasion seemed to demand it, but she could not be got to enter into conversation.

There was great anxiety in Mornington Terrace about her—the little girl who was going home; every one was at her service, but of no one did she seem to have special need.

Cyril and Greta used to hold long conversations about her, and one day Greta rushed out of the schoolroom to hide her tears; she ran up against Rachel, who held her tight and would know what was the matter.

'Cyril ought not to say it,' sobbed Greta; 'he can't mean it. She isn't ill like that, and I won't believe it; she wants so to go home!'

'And she is going home, dear,' said Rachel, kindly—'to her best home.'

By degrees every one came to feel that Marcia could never take that long sea-voyage to her Indian home, and so Colonel and Mrs. Burns, instead of taking possession of the little girl, carried only with them fond messages to mother, father, and Dick.

The day they sailed a thaw set in, as it seemed, with Marcia; she sent for Uncle Tredthorpe and asked him to telegraph to mother that she was going to her other home, and was very happy and contented.

And in very truth she seemed so, delighting in the companionship of her cousins, and begging for the little ones to visit her, as in the first week of her arrival at Mornington Terrace.

But it was no longer as a little sick child that the household tended her and loved her, it was rather as an angel tarrying a little while with them that they regarded her.

'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,' had indeed been her motto, and in the few months of her sojourn in England she had left her mark in the circle which had gathered round her.

Her straightforwardness had served as a beacon to poor Cyril, her gentleness had influenced Greta and Bob, and her keen sense of right and duty had shamed Ronald into dwelling on these things.

There was greater regard for the weak and young in that busy house since Marcia came among them, more brotherly love, more home feeling. Cyril and Greta stood amazed and silent at the sight of home-loving Marcia content to be still and patient hundreds of miles away from father and mother and all she held dear, waiting to die. 'It is what is best for me, I know,' said Marcia one day with strange wisdom. 'It is what I was sent here for, Greta dear. No, don't say you could not do it, you could if it was to be; but you and Bob and Ronald have to live and work and be busy and do good,—that is pleasant, too.'

'And I, Marcia?' said poor Cyril huskily, as if consulting an oracle.

Marcia smiled and took his hand. 'You have to be patient, Cyril dear. I don't quite know which home you are meant for yet, but you have to live the same way for both. It is quite wrong, mother says, for even children to live two ways, one for this world and one for another.'

'Marcia, you have always lived for another,' said Greta.

No, dear,' said Marcia, turning towards her; 'I

don't think I did—not altogether, I mean. I never intended to leave you or mother like this; I was trying to improve and learn things to go back to India. I thought I should be with father and mother when I grew up till the other day; but I do not mind, it all seems right now, even the lessons.'

A dim sense of the child's meaning crept into the hearts of her cousins, better than preaching, better than the wisest books, and the best counsel was this quiet example of a holy life.

Day by day little Marcia Vere faded away. But while she no longer looked for a return to the Indian home, and the English home grew hourly more of a prison to her feeble body, the home in Heaven became more distinct, more real.

The little sister was there, and there were places for all she loved; she would speak now to her cousins of her joy in welcoming them there.

'But you must not hurry to come,' she said often to them; 'for remember, this home is first now, and there is so much to do in it.'

As she had lived so she passed away, so quietly exchanging one home for another, that no one guessed the moment of departure was so near.

Ronald and Bob had come over for the day, at their own request, to see their little cousin. They had sat with her in the morning, and in the afternoon had taken their mother for a stroll into Kensington Gardens.

Running hastily upstairs, to spend another ten minutes in the sick-room, they were stopped by Greta, whose pale, quiet face, arrested them almost before her words.

'What is it?' said Bob. 'Is she asleep? Is she worse?'

'She is gone, dear,' said Greta. 'No, don't mind; it is just what she would have wished.'

'But I was away!' gasped poor Bob. 'Oh, why did I go out?'

'Hush, dear; it is all right. Mother asked you. Marcia knows it now; and she would have liked you to do it.'

'Oh, why did she die?' said Bob, surprised into speaking his thoughts,—'the only person that ever tried to help me?'

'Bob, I'll try,' said poor Greta; 'she has showed me how; and Cyril is trying, too. Ronald dear, give me your hand; I can't say it, but you know what I mean. She has made us see all things differently.'

And so the little Indian cousin vanished out of the busy London house. Her visit had only been for months; but long after the boys and girls left behind had grown to be men and women, her influence and example still guided them to good.

Marcia's Home was to be their home, and without any strange or startling change taking place in noisy Bob, energetic Greta, or silent Cyril, they were all bent on so living in their earthly home that they might be fit for that heavenly one. Even Ronald, who had seen less than any of them of his lost cousin, carried through life a sense of the reality of her life, and a desire to follow in her steps.

And seeking out the footprints of this little disciple, those who loved her could not but walk in the plainer tracks which He made Who desired little children to come unto Him.

H. A. F.

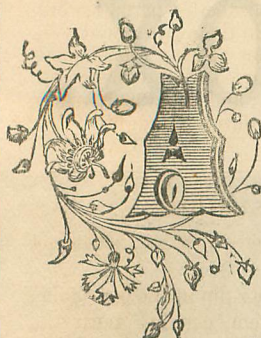


"She is gone," said Greta.

Chatterbox.



"He must have been killed on the spot."



THE RAIN.

MERCHANT was riding home from market, and had behind him his knapsack, in which there was a large sum of money. It rained heavily, and the good man was soon wet through; which annoyed him very much, and he complained of the weather being so bad while he was obliged to travel.

His way led through a thick forest. As soon as he had entered it he saw to his dismay a robber, who aimed at him with his gun. He must have been killed on the spot, but the rain had made the powder so damp that the gun missed fire. The traveller put spurs to his horse and escaped the danger.

As soon as he was in safety he said to himself, 'How foolish I was to complain of the bad weather, instead of bearing it patiently, as sent from God! If the sky had been bright and the air dry I might at this moment have been lying dead, and my wife and children would have expected me in vain. The rain of which I complained has saved both my life and my property. For the future I will never forget what the proverb says:—

"Take from God's hand what'er He will bestow;
'Tis best for thee, although it seem not so."

A DEVOTED DAUGHTER.



MORE than a hundred years ago, a sad little band might be seen making its way through a desolate tract of country, a land so little favoured by warmth and sunshine, that summer seems but a short smile on the face of bleak, ever-present winter.

The little band was guided by a few soldiers, mounted and on foot, but it was not out of respect to them that the poor peasants of the

district stood back and murmured a word or two of greeting. No! these were meant for the exiled prisoners, who were being conducted to the gloomy wastes of Siberia.

Specially the eye fell, and the greetings were directed towards a little family party, a middle-aged man, his young wife, and a toddling girl of about four years old.

It is of this little one, following the fortunes of her banished father at so early an age, that my story tells.

A healthy, lively child, she knew nothing of the political offences which had driven her father from his home, and she hardly noticed the change from wealth and society to poverty and solitude. Children need so little, that when the exiles reached their journey's end, and a hut was provided for little Eliza-

beth and her parents, the warm fire, the plain, but satisfying food, and the new, though barren country around her, pleased and interested the child. What mattered it to her that snow-covered mountains shut her in from the outer world, and that dreary black poplars swayed and groaned as the bitter winds swept round their humble dwelling.

She had her father, her mother, and a queer old Tartar attendant to amuse her, and she played about as happily all day, and dreamed as sweetly all night, as in the times of past prosperity.

The strictest orders had been given about these exiles, that no communication whatever should be allowed between them and the neighbouring small town. Neither were they to receive or send letters, their actual wants being supplied by the governor of the province, in whose charge they were placed.

In these circumstances the little Elizabeth grew up, and from the gay, thoughtless child, became the tender, loving maiden. It could not but strike her as she gained sense, that, in spite of their efforts to amuse her, her parents were almost always sad. This puzzled her at first, as by this time Elizabeth had forgot all about her early days; but after a while she learned that her parents, and her father especially, pined after some other place, some happier life, that he had formerly enjoyed, and from which he was now hopelessly shut out.

She learned, too, that the only chance for her father's happiness was the obtaining the reversal of his sentence of banishment from the Emperor of Russia.

But who was to ask such a boon, cut off as they were from the world, without friends or any means of communication with the court?

Poor Elizabeth pondered over this day and night, and at last she made up her mind that she alone must attempt to gain the pardon for her father, by journeying alone to St. Petersburg.

You who live in mild climates, and where travelling is rapid and easy, can never picture to yourselves the task this girl had set herself,—a journey on foot, of more than 2000 miles, through frozen deserts, apart from those to whom she had trusted all her life for guidance; for her father was not permitted to leave his cottage, and her mother was too feeble to think of enduring the fatigue of such a journey, even had she thought it wise to forsake her depending husband.

No! it must be done alone, and alone the timid girl must make her way to the feet of her Emperor, and there trust to God and His pity to teach her how to move his heart.

With many misgivings and tears the parents saw their brave daughter depart; she had been so happy as to find a poor old priest journeying in the same direction, and with him, though often sorely tired and cold, she managed to travel. She had the good will of the governor, too, who risked his own prospects to afford help to the devoted daughter.

They started on their journey in the short summer; but this was not altogether pleasant, as the first warm rays of the sun had loosed the frozen streamlets, and they had frequently to cross wet tracts of marsh of many miles' extent, reaching some miserable hut at nightfall wet to the skin, glad to stretch them-

selves on the bare floor in company with rough peasants, and even cattle.

But Elizabeth's troubles were as nought now compared to what were in store for her.

Worn out with age and suffering, her kind protector fell ill and died at a wayside inn, when but half the journey was performed. Depressed by grief and anxiety, winter coming on, this poor maiden of seventeen resumed her travels. Terrible snowstorms overtook her; bewildering her, and all but freezing the very blood in her veins; yet still she plodded on her way. Of money she had little; sometimes she thought this was best, as robbers infested the country, and would certainly have deprived her of any store she might have had.

The Russian peasantry are kind and hospitable, and never asked for aught in return for the bread and milk bestowed on the shivering girl; clothes and shoes they were too poor to give, and Elizabeth's garments were now in rags—a poor protection from the biting winter.

Often her heart sank within her, but she never faltered in her course. On reaching the banks of the Volga, which she must needs cross, she was roughly told by the boatmen that the river, then in a state between water and ice, could not be passed, boats could not cross it, and it was not frozen enough to walk over; a fortnight's delay would be necessary.

Poor Elizabeth, in her anguish, poured out her piteous tale to one of the men, imploring him to help her, for a fortnight's delay would exhaust her little money, and then how was she to reach St. Petersburg? The man was touched, and he conveyed her halfway across in his boat; and then, finding it impossible to proceed, he leapt with her from block to block of ice till they gained the opposite shore in safety. Then she thanked him, and pressed into his hand a little coin—one of her few left; but he—one of those noble men whom God plants in low estate—refused to take anything from her.

'Rather,' said he, 'let me add to your little store: it may bring a blessing on my wife and six children.' At the same time giving her a small sum, which the grateful girl did not refuse.

Other dangers now surrounded her path: she lost herself in a frozen wild; the dreaded robbers appeared; but, struck with wonder and pity, did not molest the helpless girl. Fatigue and cold were her daily portion, but still she persevered.

And now she was near Moscow; and here a joyful surprise awaited her. The Emperor was there, awaiting his coronation, so the long journey further to St. Petersburg was needless. At Moscow, too, the weary girl found friends; the kind sisters in a convent took her in, fed her, and clothed her; then the son of the governor of the little Siberian province met her in the street, and knew her, and by him she was presented to the Emperor; and he, deeply impressed by her long and painful journey, her youth, and her devotion to her parents, granted her the greatly-desired pardon for her father.

Elizabeth had the pleasure of accompanying the messenger who conveyed the glad tidings.

How different a journey was that! A comfortable carriage, relays of horses, and a heart full of joyful hopes.

The story ends happily. Elizabeth's parents were restored to wealth and rank in their own country—Poland: and she herself, after sharing their happiness for a short time, was married to the governor's son, who had long loved her, and who was in every way a husband worthy of this devoted daughter.

H. A. F.

INTO THE SUNSET.

ROW me out to the sunset—row me, fisher-boy Ben,

Out where the golden cloudlets dip in the sea again;
I always wanted to reach them, nestling anear the sun:

Row me, then, fair and softly—we shall get there ere day is done.'

He took the oar and he rowed her, little fisher-girl Sue—

He rowed her towards the sunset, lilac, golden, and blue;

The breeze blew soft in their faces, and smiles came all unsought,

But they had to turn in the twilight, to turn in search of port.

Susy wept at the landing, wept as she stood on the strand:

'I wanted to stay,' she pleaded, 'out in the sunset-land;

You by my side, Ben darling, always smiling and true,

And beautiful clouds around me, golden, lilac, and blue.'

She stood no more on the pebbles, nor played by the waves anigh,

Nor yet with the fisher-laddie took ship for the sunset sky;

But, pale and patient, wasted, on cottage pallet laid,
On the eve of a longer voyage, wistful yet not afraid.

Fisher-boy Ben was near her, her mimic boat on the floor—

Toys and the old earth-pleasures were not for the maiden more;

The curfew-bell was ringing, and the August sky was aglow,

When she bade them lift her, lift her, to gaze on the western show,

Golden, lilac, and crimson—crimson, lilac, and blue,
Dear friends of the fisher-maiden, these clouds of brilliant hue!

'I am going, Ben, to the sunset,' she whispered, her face ashine,

'Which we tried to reach long ago, dear—tried, but we hadn't time.'



On the road to Siberia.



Into the Sunset.

I shall not go in your boat, Ben—that was a childish dream :

We may not travel together, as we did in the April gleam ;

But all the same you will follow—don't leave me long alone,

For the sunset gates I shall enter are the real gates of Home.

Home, where my mother went, such a many years ago—

Home, which my baby sister fretted and cried for so—

Home, where poor father travelled, on the dreadful stormy day,

When the women wept on the shore and the boats went down in the bay—

'Home, where are God and Jesus, where happy angels dwell—

Ben, draw the curtains wider, I want so to see them well.

Yes, they are there in the sunlight, waiting, calling for Sue.

Ben, you must follow me, dearest; I cannot come back to you.'

Crimson, lilac, and golden—lilac, golden, and grey,
Fell the sunset shadows that pleasant summer day,
When Ben the fisher-boy stood and strained his eyes
on the strand

For one last fond look as the maiden sailed for the
Better Land.

H. A. F.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 324.)

SO I went down to the great red withdrawing-room, and bid the maids tell their mistress that I would speak with her, and would wait her pleasure. But Mistress Lennox sent a haughty message, that 'She had no dealings with me or mine, and took it ill that I should trouble her at such a time of bereavement!'

I was sorely troubled what to do upon this rebuff, for I was not minded to part in anger from Sylvia's kinsfolk, for her sake.

And as I sat awhile, musing, the memory came back to me of the last time when I had been in that gloomy chamber. It was well-nigh fifteen years before, when my dear sister Dolly lay sick and dying, and I had journeyed up from Herdington to see her once more; but my Lady Betty had sharply denied me, and sent me away.

All the bitter agony of that day was borne upon my mind, as I looked round and saw no sign of change, beyond, maybe, a trifle of fading in the red brocade hangings, and in the needlework seats of the tall ebony chairs.

There stood the spinette and Dolly's harp, the old china, the blue dragons on the high mantelpiece with its carved pilasters, the tapestry frame, which looked as though never a stitch had been worked on it since—

Ah me! I seemed to see Lady Betty standing there, on the flowery tent-stitch carpet, in her grand modish dress of cherry and black silk, and her yellow satin train all brocaded with strange birds. How hard and stately she looked, with her powdered hair dressed up high above her head, her thin lips closely pressed together!

I could not bear to think of it more, but hid my face in my hands to drive away that haunting image; and I shivered, though it was a fair summer day.

With hurried, trembling steps, I began to seek again Sylvia's chamber. But it was no easy task with so many doors all of the like fashion.

I durst not open one, lest I should fall on the wrong bed-chamber, but presently seeing a door but half closed I made bold to enter.

One step more, and I started and stood aghast on the threshold, for by a strange chance I had come upon the chamber of death.

There was a dim, shadowy outline, half revealed through the white sheet, on the bed, but the face was uncovered, and the finely-marked features, so white, so still and marble-like, were those of Lady Betty Lennox.

I was stealing softly away—as though, forsooth, footstep of mine could ever wake the dead—when the sound of a low, suppressed sob, made me look once more. Surely, it could not be! and yet indeed it was Sylvia there, on her knees by the bedside.

Wonder and pity filled my heart, and I could only wait and watch like a dumb creature. But she had heard the rustling of my gown, and, looking up, she saw me. Then rising in all haste, she bent over the bed, kissed the cold brow, and then, taking my hand, led me from the room.

'Forgive me, dear Aunt Millicent,' she murmured through her tears; 'I could not go away for ever and leave her without one last kiss.'

CHAPTER II.

It was growing late in the afternoon, when at length we set forth in a hackney-coach on our homeward journey. The packing of Sylvia's baggage had delayed us somewhat, for though she herself took no heed of the matter, yet old Abigail did make it a serious task to fold and press each silken gown, with its furbelows, and lace, and long trains, whereof I never saw so dainty a store.

There were ornaments and trinkets, too, of divers kinds, so that it was plain to see that if my Lady Betty had been hard of speech, she had been lavish of gold in the decking out of her pretty grandchild.

As I looked upon all this finery, again did the thought come back to me that a girl bred as Sylvia had been was truly more fitted for town assemblies, and visitings, and the like gay doings, than for the quiet life at Herdington Rectory, where one day was as another, and nought ever happened.

But it was too late to draw back from my given word, and, moreover, what better could the poor child do than come to her own kin, who would love her, and give her a hearty welcome for her mother's sake?

Perchance Sylvia had guessed my doubts, and would have me to know that she felt no regret for the life she was leaving. I cannot tell how that may be, but this I know, that from the moment we started she dried her tears, and rattled on with a stream of talk which vastly entertained me.

On the other side of Bloomsbury Square she did point out Mrs. Steele's house, whose husband is a writer, and where many persons of quality were wont to resort, to meet the wits of the time. Then, as we rumbled along over the stone pavement through the streets of the town, she showed me Lady Jekyll's fine house, and Dr. Garth's, where she had been to a rout but a month before; and she told me how that Lady Betty had taken her once to the Queen's

Drawing-room, and how Queen Anne had patted her cheek, and said that Sylvia was a pretty name, fit for a romance, and suited her mightily.

So she talked on for a while, till at length, wearied out, the poor girl leant back in the coach, with her eyes closed, and I could see how pale she was, and guessed rightly that she had put constraint on herself, all this time, to do me pleasure.

We had reached the open road by this, with fields on either side, and I started to mark how low the sun was—just setting, indeed, and casting a ruddy glow over all the sky, and the long, low, flat horizon.

I am not a timid woman by nature, but my heart misgave me, as I thought of the open, desolate Heath which lay before us, and the which we should have to cross after dark. As we journeyed on in silence, there did come into my mind the memory of all the misadventures which our Timothy related that very morning, and many more which had befallen to travellers on this same Hounslow Heath.

I thought of the chest wherein lay all poor Sylvia's treasures, and which for the more security had been tied with cords at the back, where none could fail to see it. Never before had hackney-coach seemed to crawl along so slowly, and in vain did I bid the hired coachman to drive on and make all speed; he did but swear at the bad roads, till I was fain to shut the window, lest Sylvia should hear his ill-language.

'Tis true the poor man had some just cause of complaining, being town-bred, for our highway was most times impassable, save in the height of summer. And even in dry weather the ruts do get so deep, that if by mischance the wheel slipped in one of a sudden, it well-nigh overturned the coach.

More than once did we all alight, while the driver by main force pulled the wheel out of a hole. And as it grew darker matters grew worse; we scarce made any progress, and I began to fear that we should not reach home that night.

'Twas pitch dark, for there was no moon, and we three women were by ourselves on the wild, dreary Heath, far away from any friendly shelter.

At every jolt and jerk, poor Abigail, who was no traveller, could not keep back her cries of 'Alack-a-day!' 'Woe's me!' and sundry others of a like nature; and presently, to make matters worse, she must needs have it that she could hear the sound of horses' feet behind us, and that whenever we made a halt they did stop likewise.

Sylvia held my hand tightly, but she carried herself bravely, and said nought: so to hide my own fears, which I durst not show, I began to make discourse on sundry matters.

'What think you will the master say, Abigail, to see us home so much sooner than he looketh for? He knew that I was minded to bide at the least two nights in the town.'

'Ah, Mistress Millicent, we shall never reach home!' interrupted the poor woman.

I made a show of laughing at her fears, but it was not a hearty laugh, and we had soon fallen again into silence, which became more painful every moment.

Of a sudden we came to a stop in the middle of the road, and a rough voice shouted,—

'Halt, or I fire!'

I put my head to the window, and could just make

out in the darkness that some one stood in front of the horses' heads, and had turned them half round.

Sure enough, here then were the highwaymen we had heard so much of. My first thought was of Sylvia's chest, as, for my own part, I had but little of money or valuables about me; and I had ever been told that in like encounters there was small danger to life if none made resistance.

And who, indeed, was there to resist? The only man of our party, the driver, showed no signs of doing that which would place him in any peril. He was plainly too frightened even for swearing.

It was a moment of fearful suspense. Then suddenly our eyes were dazzled by a lantern being turned full on us, and two men with masks on, seeing only women in the hackney-coach, ordered us to alight. Hereupon Abigail, who felt that her worst fears had come true, set up loud screams, which I sought not to quiet, for, perchance, they might give warning of our danger and bring us help.

But one of the men, who seemed the leader, turned fiercely upon her, and with loud oaths and threats bid her hold her peace.

Meanwhile, the other two had cut the cords which held up Sylvia's chest, and, impudent varlets that they were! did ask me for the key. I told them truly that I had it not, and whispered Sylvia to drop it on the ground, that she might make the like reply.

Angry and baffled, they tried to force it open with their rapiers, but it was of solid oak with a massive lock—my poor sister Dolly's wedding chest—and for a little time they tried in vain; but just as they threatened to lay hands on me and search me for the key, Sylvia, whose young ears were sharper than mine, said, in a low tone,—

'Hark! do you not hear the sound of horses coming near?'

I listened, but at first could distinguish nothing: yet Sylvia was right, help was at hand.

(To be continued.)

FEASTS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

THOSE who complain of the present high price of provisions will find it tantalising to read the accounts given of public dinners in the olden time. In the year 1478, at a feast given by the Wax-Chandlers' Company, the sums spent on the various items seem almost fabulously small. Loins of mutton, veal, and beef, were fourpence each, while a leg of mutton was twopence halfpenny; pigs were fourpence, geese sixpence, a dozen pigeons sevenpence, and a hundred eggs eightpence; a kilderkin of ale was eightpence, and a gallon of wine the same price; so that the cost of the entertainment was seven shillings. During the next half century pigs rose from fourpence to sixpence, but in 1531 the cost of the provisions furnished for a dinner given by some serjeants-at-law was still most moderate. Calves were purchased for four shillings and eightpence, and sheep for one shilling and tenpence each. The purveyors of the Lord Mayor's feasts of the present time would find it difficult to believe that provisions were ever sold at such prices, even taking into account the difference in the value of money.



"Sylvia bent over the bed and kissed the cold brow."

Chatterbox.



A Fox in the Furrow.

A FOX IN THE FURROW.



HERO of Scotch story escaped from his foes by making his way down the course of a stream, that no trace of his footsteps might be found. Equally sagacious was an Irish fox, which, pursued by the hounds, was seen by a farmer, while he was ploughing in a field, to run along in the furrow directly before him. While wondering how it was that

the sly creature was pursuing this course, he heard the cry of dogs, and turning round, saw the whole pack at a dead stand, near the other end of the field, at the very spot where Reynard had entered the newly-formed trench. The fox had evidently taken this ingenious way of breaking the scent and so eluding pursuit; and the farmer, admiring the cleverness of the animal, let it get off without betraying its whereabouts.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 335.)



THE men had succeeded in breaking open the chest, by wrenching off the brass hinges, when of a sudden one gave a low whistle.

In a trice the men started up, and made their escape in all haste, leaving us there in the darkness, with all Sylvia's finery scattered about on the ground.

At the first we durst not move or speak, so sorely troubled and disturbed in mind were we; till a voice cries out, well nigh close to us,—

'Holla! what have we here? A coach overturned in the cart-ruts?'

It was a voice that methought I knew; at the least it was a friend at hand: so I quickly replied,—

'Nay, good master, whoever you be, it is no coach overturned, but honest travellers, waylaid and beset by highwaymen, who even now have made off, at the sound of your approach, doubtless.'

As I spoke, I picked up the lantern the fellows had dropped, and did raise it up to see who it was that had brought us such timely help.

But the foremost of the two riders had recognised me first, and cried out in a hearty tone,—

'Why, surely, if 'tisn't Mistress Millicent! Who would have thought to fall upon you, by good luck, in this way?'

'Good luck, indeed!' said I; for I soon saw that it was none other than my dear lad, Ambrose Coppinger, the son of our old friend, my Lady Coppinger, of Herdington Manor-house.

'Where are the scoundrels?' cries he, in hot anger. 'Which way went they? We will be even with them yet, and make them give up their spoils.'

At these words of the hot youth a new fear troubled me mightily, lest blows, and perchance bloodshed, should come of it.

'They had but that moment burst open Sylvia's trunk,' said I, 'and I doubt greatly if they had time to carry off much.'

But Ambrose and his companion were not to be thus turned off from their purpose, and I doubt not would have gone off in wild pursuit across the dark open-common ground, when, to my surprise, Sylvia spoke in a low, sweet tone,—

'Do not leave us, gentlemen,' said she. 'We need your escort, if it please you, to protect us. There is no real harm done yet, only a few gowns and trinkets spread abroad.'

So saying she took the lantern from my hand, and began to collect her scattered treasures.

Very fair did Sylvia look as the light glimmered on her sweet face and golden hair, for her hood of cramoisie silk had fallen back on her shoulders. And for all she was so gentle in speech, there was an air of command about her which brooked no denial, as though she had been my Lady Duchess.

In a moment the two young men sprang to the ground, calling the serving-man to hold their horses; and there were they, who had paid no heed to my words, at the beck and call of a young mistress they had never set eyes on before.

It was a chilly night, so, drawing my travelling-hood close round me, I mounted into the coach again, leaving old Abigail to help the young folks in restoring the things to the chest.

As I watched them from the window I could scarce take my eyes off Ambrose. Even by that light it was plain to see how much the lad had grown, and taken upon him a fine air of fashion, since he had been away at Oxford and London.

He wore his own glossy brown hair, done to perfection like a periwig, so that few could have known it; and his excellent tall figure showed off the green silk suit laced with gold, and finished with deep lace ruffles at the sleeves. It was hard to believe that this was the little lad I had known since he could scarce walk alone, and had loved as though he had been my own child—it was hard, I say, to recognise him in this fine, big, manly fellow, wearing his sword and top-knots like any man of fashion.

As I thought then of my Lady Coppinger, and how she must pine to see him after his long absence from home, I cried to them to make quick work with the chest, which they had bound together with a cord, and after many trials and failures, whereat they were mighty merry, they secured it to the back of the hackney-coach once more.

Meantime the hired driver, being now assured in his mind that the peril was past, did cautiously creep out from his hiding-place behind a furze-bush, and mounted the box, with loud bragging and brave, boastful words, of how 'he would give chase to the scoundrels, and if he had his way there should be no more highwaymen on the Heath,' and much more talk of like nature, whereat I was fain to laugh.

Sylvia and poor Abigail having taken their places,

we set forth once more, with the young men riding beside the coach as an escort, for Ambrose vowed he would not leave us till we were safe at the Rectory.

I bade him think of my Lady Coppinger and Sir Gilbert, who would doubtless be looking to see him earlier, and would marvel at the delay, but he only replied lightly,—

‘Nay, Mistress Millicent, they expect me not so soon; and, truth to tell, it is due to my friend Ned Prior here, who has business in this neighbourhood, that I am come.’

He stopped abruptly, and as I turned to look at his companion, the which was a stranger to me, I caught sight of a warning gesture. Thereupon I asked no questions, but it set me thinking what mysterious business was here that Ambrose might not tell to me, who had known all his secrets, and had got him out of so many boyish scrapes in bygone days.

Truly it was no concern of mine, yet my pride was hurt; and, moreover, I liked not the look of this friend, who began talking to me in a smooth, easy way, thinking I had noticed nought. But I was not minded to content him, and so kept silence.

On we went through the darkness, and a long weary journey it seemed. It was well for us that Ambrose knew every turn of the road, and ‘could have found his way blindfold,’ as he said, for our poor driver was sore troubled, and at his wits’ end, many a time, specially when we reached our Herdington Lane, and the cart-ruts grew deeper and rougher, till he swore that we must have got into the midst of a ploughed field.

At length, I could just make out dimly the church tower and the yew-trees like dark shadows before us, and in a few more minutes we had reached home, and were safe at last after all our perils.

CHAPTER III.

I HAVE often thought that those first days at Herdington must have seemed very strange to Sylvia. For a girl used to routs and entertainments, and a town life with persons of quality and fashion, it was no little change to be dropped into our rustic ways.

And yet it was a marvel to see with what a fine sweet-natured courtesy she did suit herself to our customs, till there was not a man or serving-wench about the place but would have done anything at Mistress Sylvia’s bidding.

When my brother John first saw his niece, he could scarce believe but that his eyes or his memory had played him false. ‘Am I dreaming?’ he cried: ‘or is the past come back to me?’ Look at her, Millicent. Why, it is Dolly herself standing there, as on the day I saw her last!’

He took off his spectacles, rubbed them, and again, looked earnestly at the blushing, smiling girl, who said in her soft, pretty way,—‘It is mighty pleasant to hear you say I am like my mother, but when Aunt Lennox said so it was even when she was in a rage and would chide me. Tell me more about my mother, I love to hear of her from those who loved her.’

Whereupon, what should my brother John do, but lay aside his learned papers, and talk to Sylvia by the

hour together about her mother’s childhood, her life at Herdington, and aught else that the girl was minded to ask him. It was a marvel to me to note how soon a warm friendship did grow betwixt the two, so diverse in every way.

Before many days had passed the minister did say indeed to me that his little Sylvia was the sunshine of the house, and when I bid him take heed that he spoil her not with over-much kindness, he did but smile and reply ‘that some natures spoil not; they are like the golden pippins in the orchard, which do but ripen and sweeten in the sunshine.’

Ah! those were pleasant, sunny days, when the hay-making in the great meadow did make good progress, and while we were content to look on Sylvia would play daintily with a fork, toss up a tiny haycock, and be mighty merry over her day’s work. Then, too, we were not wanting in company; for, on one pretext or the other, Ambrose was for ever coming over from the Manor House, and would linger about for hours, glad to see his old friends again.

One day he would bring a handful of wild flowers, of which he would needs learn the names from me; for I will own that I have ever taken an honest pride in my knowledge of herbs and their botanic names, and it is a rare delight to me to search out the nature and properties of some strange plant.

Yet it were but truth to own that Ambrose did show a marvellous ignorance as to wayside weeds which every country child knows; still I could not find it in my heart to chide the lad, even when he would bring the same flower again and again, forgetting what I had told him but two days before, till at last even Sylvia, who knew nought of country sights, would laugh merrily at his mistakes.

Another marvel, too, was that Ambrose, who from a boy had never shown a liking for books or study, would now seek out my brother John, talk to him on religion or politics; or I should more truly say, listen with all due deference, and give from time to time an approving nod.

And so it came about, that from one cause or another scarce a day passed without young Coppinger being with us, and we had ever a hearty welcome for him, thinking it but seemly that he should show so strong a liking and respect for his old friends.

Ah, me! how often in our own conceit are we blind to that which goeth on before our eyes!

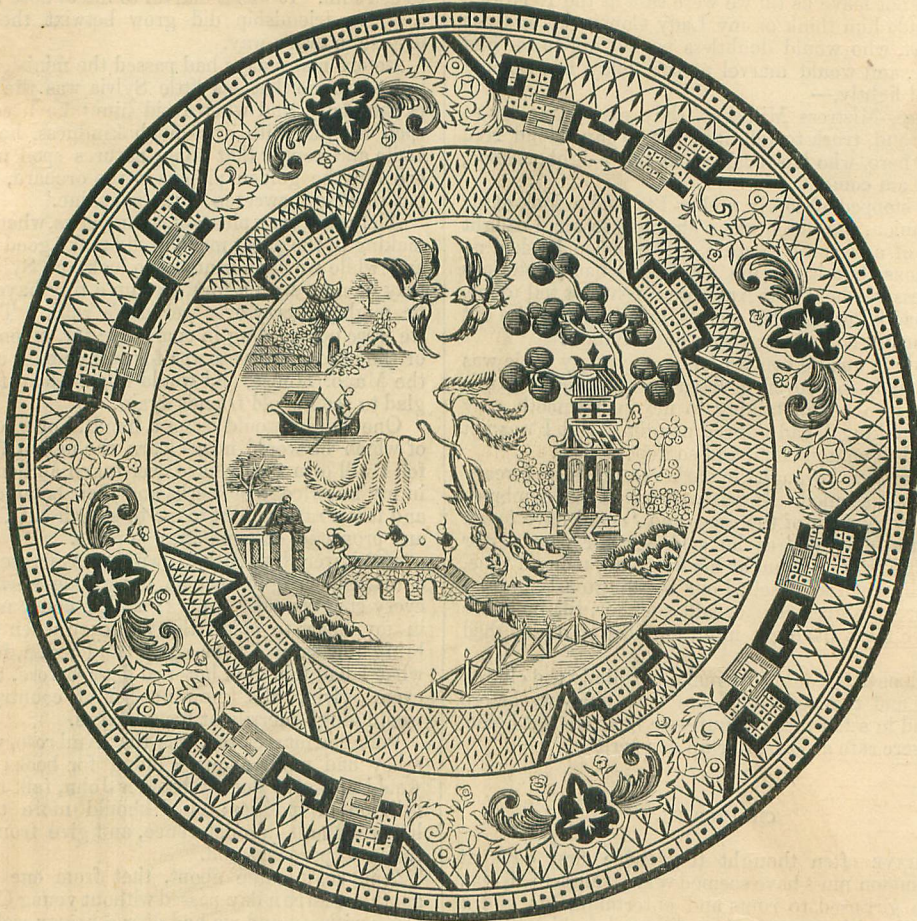
A sharp awakening was at hand.

One day—well I remember it!—we were about to make the gooseberry wine, for which my mother was so famous, and I had carefully treasured her receipt, and never failed to make it each year when the gooseberries failed not.

Sylvia had begun to help me gather the fruit, but soon wearied of the prickly work, till Ambrose coming as usual, on some chance pretext, set to it in real earnest, and playfully urged the girl to carry the basket for him to fill.

The sun was very hot and I was weary of stooping, so that I was well content to see my work done for me, when in midst of the young folks’ merry laughter I heard the sound of wheels coming up the coach-road.

Who could it be? With small delay I untied my big apron and went towards the house, when what



should I see but my Lady Coppinger's grand coach stopping at the door, and she herself, in a grand company-dress of rhubarb-coloured brocade slashed with saffron, stepping out to meet me!

'Good day, Mistress Millicent,' said she. 'I see you are busy in the garden, and I would not delay your needful work.'

So saying she came hastily towards me, but there was no friendliness in her greeting. Something in the set look of my lady's face, and the sharp tone of her voice, warned me of a storm brewing, and an instinct which I could scarce account for made me seek to keep her from the garden.

'Tis hot in the garden,' I replied; 'let us have a quiet talk in the oaken parlour, for a little rest would be mighty pleasant to me.'

But madam would brook no denial, and steadily led the way down the nut-walk to the fruit-garden, guided doubtless by the sound of voices.

(To be continued.)

THE STORY OF THE COMMON WILLOW-PATTERN PLATE.

COMMON consent has given to the best kinds of pottery the name which tells its origin; and the name *China* is applied alike to the ornaments on the mantelpiece, the crockery in the closet, or to that vast empire which stretches from the north to the south of the east coast of Asia.

Our present manufacturers have far outstripped, in beauty of material and design, the pottery of the old Chinese specimens, yet the sale of the common blue plate, known as the 'willow pattern,' exceeds that of all the others put together. The name is derived from the figure of the tree in the centre of the plate, said to represent a willow in the spring, which unfolds its blossom before its leaves appear.



Almost every child has stared at the mysterious figures on the willow-pattern plate, and wondered what those three persons in dim blue outline did upon that bridge, whence they came, and whither they were flying. What is the boatman without oars doing on that white stream? Who live in the houses on that charmed island? or why do those huge doves always flutter over the scene?

What it is all about we will inform the reader in the following story, which is said to be to the

Chinese what our *Jack the Giant-killer* or *Robinson Crusoe* is to us.

THE STORY OF THE WILLOW-PATTERN PLATE.

On the right-hand side is seen a Chinese house, of unusual size and magnificence. The wealth of the owner is shown by its being of two stories in height—a rare thing in China,—by the out-buildings at the back (to the right), and by the large trees which are growing upon all sides of the main building.

This house belonged to a mandarin of great power, who had grown rich by serving the Emperor in a department like our Excise. The work of the office, *as is the case* in other places besides China, was done by a secretary, named Chang, while the business of the master consisted in receiving bribes from the merchants, at whose smuggling he winked, in exact proportion as he was paid for it. The wife of the mandarin having, however, died suddenly, he requested the Emperor to allow him to retire from his duties, and he was urgent in his suit because the merchants had now begun to talk of the unfairness and dishonesty of the Chinese manager of the Customs.

The emperor granted the request; and to the house represented on the plate the mandarin retired, taking with him his only daughter, Koong-see, and his secretary, Chang, whose services he had retained for a few months in order to put his accounts in such array as to bear a scrutiny if he should be called upon to produce them.

When the faithful Chang had completed this duty he was discharged. Too late, however! The youth had seen and loved the mandarin's daughter. At sunset Koong-see was observed to linger with her maid on the steps which led to the banquet-room; and as the twilight came on she stole away down the path to a distant part of the grounds, and there the young lovers, on the last evening of Chang's engagement, vowed to be true to each other.

And on many an evening afterwards, when Chang was supposed to be miles away, the lovers met amongst the orange-trees. By the assistance of the lady's handmaid, these interviews were obtained without the knowledge of the old mandarin: for the lovers well knew that, their stations in life being unequal, the father would never consent to their union.

But at last the tidings of these interviews reached the old man's ears, who from that time forbade his daughter to go beyond the walls of the house. Chang was commanded to discontinue his visits upon pain of death; and the mandarin ordered a high wall of wood to be built across the pathway, from the extremity of the wall to the water's edge, as is shown on the plate. The lady's handmaid, too, was dismissed, and her place supplied by an old domestic, whose heart was as withered as her shrivelled face.

To provide for his daughter's imprisonment, and to enable her to take exercise in the fresh air, the mandarin built a suite of apartments adjoining his banquet-room, and jutting out over the water's edge, with terraces upon which the young lady might walk in security. These apartments having no outlet but through the banquet-hall, in which the mandarin spent the greater part of his time, and being completely surrounded by water, the father rested content that he should have no further trouble from secret meetings. As also the windows of his sitting-room looked out upon the water, any attempt at communication by means of a boat would be at once seen and frustrated by him. To complete the disappointment of the lovers, he went still further: he betrothed his daughter to a wealthy friend, a Ta-jin, or duke of high degree, whom she had never seen. The Ta-jin was her equal in wealth, and in every respect but age, for the gentleman was much older than the lady.

The nuptials were, as usual, determined upon without any consultation of the lady; and the wedding was to take place 'at the fortunate age of the moon, when the peach-tree should blossom in the spring.'

The willow-tree was in blossom then; the peach-tree had scarcely formed its buds. Poor Koong-see shuddered at what she called her doom, and trembled as she watched the buds of the peach-tree, whose branches grew close to the walls of her prison. [See plate.] But her heart was cheered by a happy omen—a bird came and built its nest in the corner above her window.

One day when she had sat on the narrow terrace for several hours, watching the little architect carrying straws and feathers to its future home, the shades of evening came upon her, and she did not retire as usual, but sat and gazed sadly upon the water. As she did so, a half cocoa-nut shell, which was fitted-up with a miniature sail, floated gently close to her feet. By the aid of her parasol she reached it from the water.

Her delighted surprise at its contents caused her to exclaim aloud in such a manner as to bring the old servant to her side, and nearly led to a discovery; but Koong-see made some excuse, and dismissed the woman.

As soon as the maid was gone she anxiously examined the little boat. In it she found a bead which she had given to her lover—a proof from whose hands the little boat had come. Chang had launched it on the other side of the water. There was also a piece of bamboo paper, and in light characters were written some Chinese verses:—

The nest yon winged artist builds,
Some robber-bird shall tear away:
So yields her hopes the affianced bride,
The wealthy lord's reluctant prey.'

'He must have been near me,' she murmured, 'for he must have seen my bird's nest by the peach-tree.'

She read on:—

'The fluttering bird prepares a home,
In which the spoiler soon shall dwell;
Forth goes the weeping bride, constrained,
A hundred tongues the triumph swell.
Mourn for the tiny architect,
A stronger bird hath ta'en it's nest;
Mourn for the hapless, stolen bride:
How vain the hope to soothe her breast!'

Koong-see burst into tears, but hearing her father approaching, she hid the little boat in the folds of her loose flowing robe. When he was gone she read the verses again, and again wept over them.

Upon further examination she found upon the back these words: 'As this boat sails to you, so all my thoughts tend to the same centre; but when the willow-blossom drops from the bough, and the peach-tree unfolds its buds, your faithful Chang will sink with the lotus-blooms beneath the deep waters: there will he see the circles on the smooth river, when the willow-blossom falls upon it from the bough—broken away like his love from its parent-stem.' As a sort of postscript was added, 'Cast your thoughts upon the waters, as I have done, and I shall hear your words.'

Koong-see well understood such language, and trembled as she thought of Chang's threat of self-destruction. Having no other writing materials, she sought her ivory tablets, and with the needle she had been using in embroidery she scratched her answer in the same strain in which her lover had addressed her. This was her reply: 'Do not wise husbandmen gather the fruits they fear will be stolen? The sunshine lengthens, and the vineyard is threatened to be spoiled by the hands of strangers. The fruit you most prize will be gathered when the willow-blossom droops upon the bough.'

Much doubting, she placed her tablets in the little boat, and after the manner of her countrywomen she placed therein a stick of frankincense. When it became dark she lighted the frankincense and launched the little boat upon the stream. The current gradually drew it away, and it floated safely till she could trace it no longer in the distance. That no accident should have overturned the boat, or extinguished the light, she had been taught to believe was a promise of good fortune and success; so, with a lighter heart, she closed her casements and retired to rest.

Days and weeks passed on, but no more little boats appeared, and Koong-see began to doubt the truth of the omen. The blossom upon the willow-tree—for she watched it many an hour—seemed about to wither, when a circumstance occurred which gave her fresh cause for fear.

The old mandarin entered his daughter's apartment one morning in high good humour. In his hands he bore a box full of rare jewels, which he said were a present from the Ta-jin, or Duke, to whom he had betrothed her. He congratulated her upon her good fortune, and left her, saying that the wealthy man was coming that day to take food and wine in her father's house. Koong-see's hopes all vanished, and she found her only relief in tears.

Like the netted bird, she saw the snare drawing closer, but she had no power to escape the toils.

The duke came, his servants beating gongs before him, and shouting out his achievements in war. The number of his titles was great, and the lanterns on which they were inscribed very magnificent. Owing to his rank he was borne in a sedan, to which were attached eight bearers, showing his rank to be that of a viceroy. The old mandarin gave him a suitable reception, and dismissed his followers.

The gentlemen then sat down to the feast according to custom, and many were the 'cups of salutation' which were drank between them, till at last they became boisterous in their merriment.

The noise of revelry seemed to have attracted a stranger to the house, who sought alms at the door of the banquet-room. His tale being unheeded, he took from the porch an outer garment which had been left there by one of the servants, and thus disguised he spread the screen across the lower part of the banquet-hall; passing forwards, he came to Koong-see's apartment, and in another moment the lovers were locked in each other's arms.

It was Chang who had crossed the banquet-room. He besought Koong-see to fly with him, 'for,' said he, 'the willow-blossom already droops upon the bough.' She gave into his hands the box of jewels which the duke had that day presented to her,

and finding that the elders were growing sleepy over their cups, and that the servants were drinking and feasting elsewhere, Koong-see and Chang stole behind the screen, passed the door, descended the steps, and gained the foot of the bridge, beside the willow-tree. The old mandarin caught a glimpse of his daughter in the garden, and raising the hue and cry, he staggered out after them himself.

To represent this part of the story are the three figures upon the bridge. [See plate.] The first is the lady, Koong-see, carrying a distaff; the second is Chang, the lover, bearing off the box of jewels; and the third is the old mandarin, the lady's father, whose paternal authority and rage are supposed to be shown by the whip which he bears in his hand. As the Chinese artist knows nothing of perspective, he could not place the old gentleman—to be seen—in any other situation than so near the fugitives. The sketch simply tells of the flight and the pursuit, and is enough for the purpose.

CHAPTER II.

THE old mandarin, tipsy as he was, had some difficulty in keeping up the pursuit, and Chang and Koong-see eluded him without much effort.

The Ta-jin fell into a furious rage on hearing what had occurred, and was well-nigh smothered in his drunken passion. Those few of the servants who were sober enough to have joined the pursuit were detained to attend upon the duke, who was supposed to be in a fit.

Every plan was adopted during the following days to discover whither the undutiful daughter had fled; but when the servants returned, evening after evening, and brought no news which gave any hope of detecting her place of retirement, the old mandarin became a prey to low spirits and ill humour.

The duke, however, was more active and persevering, and he employed spies in every village for miles round. He made a vow of vengeance against Chang, and congratulated himself that, by his power as magistrate of the district, when Chang could be discovered he would put him to death for the theft of the jewels. The lady too, he said, should die, unless she fulfilled the wishes of her parent.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE BLOODHOUND.

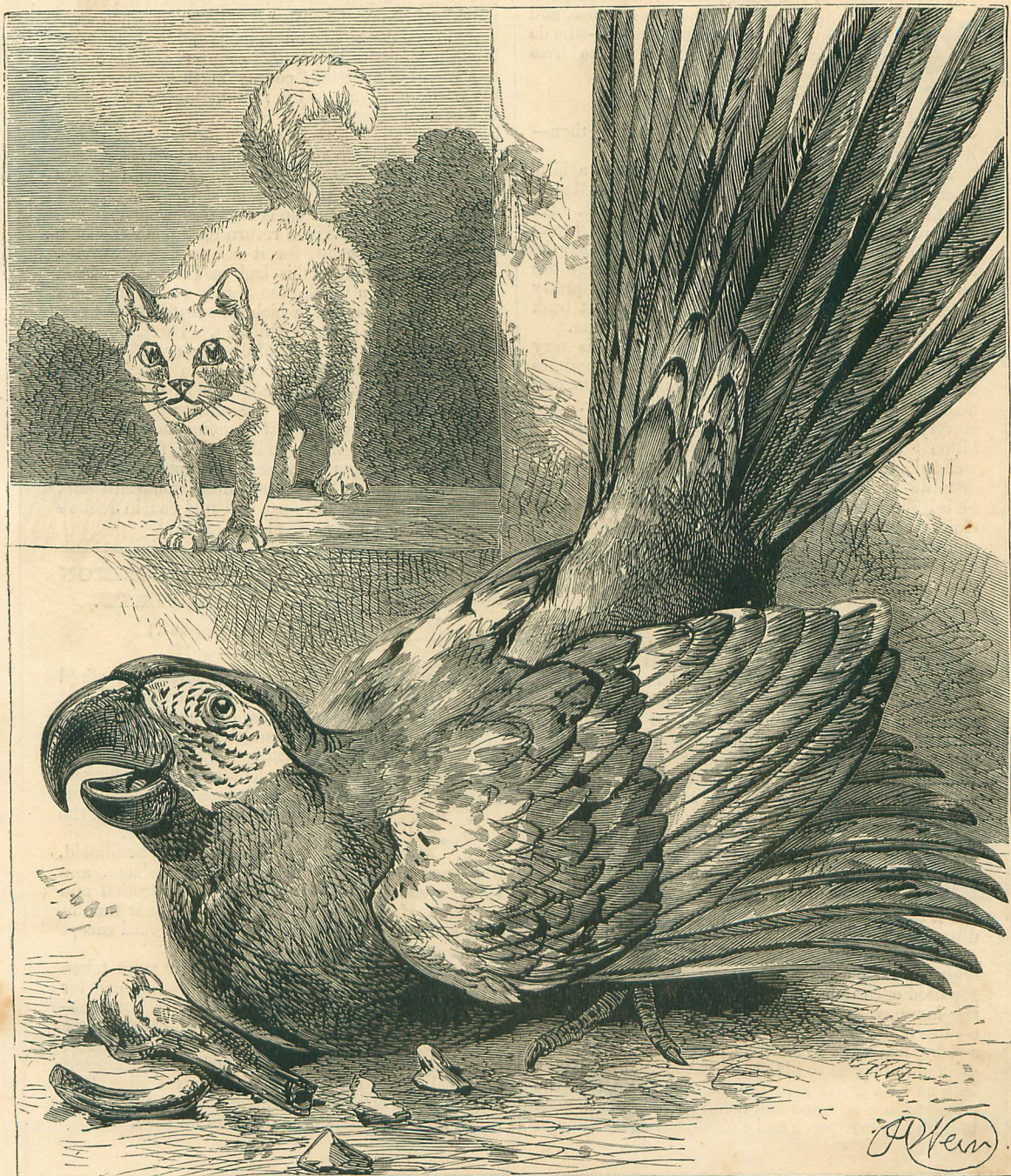


IT is a well-known fact that in olden times the bloodhound was used for tracking fugitives. The only chances of escape being either that of shedding blood on the track, or making for a running stream, and wading some distance through the water. There is a tradition that Robert Bruce, one of the ancient kings of Scotland, was chased by the Lord of Lorne, and only escaped the bloodhounds by wading some distance up a running stream, and so throwing them off the scent. The picture represents a bloodhound who lost the scent of the poor fugitive that it is pursuing.



The Bloodhound.

Chatterbox.



Jacko with poor Fussys bone.

THE TRUE STORY OF JACKO.

By the Author of 'Earth's Many Voices.'



IN this country there is a county, and in this county there is a village, and in this village there is a garden, and in this garden there is a house, and in this house there lives,—who do you think? In this house lives Jacko.

Who is Jacko? Guess.

A boy? No.

Something very like a boy, then—a monkey? No. Then who is Jacko?

Well, I suppose I must tell you. Jacko is a bird. Jacko is a bird called a Macaw. Jacko the Macaw has fine feathers, scarlet, and yellow, and blue. He has great wings, and great claws, and a great beak; he is a great bird altogether. I am happy to say he cannot fly because he is old, so his great wings are now only for show; but he can run after you pretty quickly with his great feet, and with his great beak he can bite off your finger if you like to try him.

Jacko bites his enemies in anger, which is very naughty of him; and he bites his friends sometimes in friendship, which is very disagreeable of him, and makes him rather a terrible fellow altogether. He is very fond of his master and mistress, and has bitten them both in love; but he is generally very well behaved with them, and will sit on his master's or mistress's foot quite peaceably for an hour. When he is ill he will lie in his mistress's lap like a sick child. Once I saw him perch upon his master's arm and take his master's nose in his beak, and rock his master's head gently from side to side. It was fortunate that he was not in the mood for biting off the nose in friendship just then.

Jacko can talk a little. He says, 'Come along, Jacko, come along;' and when you come, as soon as he thinks you near enough he pecks at you with his great beak. When he is in a good temper he will say 'Poor, poor!' He will sit up on the ivy all the morning and talk to himself, and he will call the gardener, and he will cough and sneeze, and crow and cackle, in a very funny manner.

If Jacko sees sparrows picking up a few crumbs he will rush up, sweeping his great wings along the ground, and take their meal for himself. If he sees poor pussy picking up a bone he creeps down from his ivy, helping himself down with beak and claws, and all at once pussy darts away from the bone she is enjoying, and you may guess what follows. Jacko has it to himself, while poor puss stands at a little distance watching.

Jacko spends his days in the garden and his nights in an outhouse where garden-tools are kept. He used once to be taken every night to a room in the house, where he had a very good perch on a clothes-horse, and was very comfortable, but by-and-by he bit a great hole in the door, and was obliged to be sent to his present abode. Before very long he bit a great hole in that door also, and the carpenter had to come and mend it. He used once to have a proper perch and a chain, but he bit through

his chain, and he bites through any chain that can be put upon him.

Now I must tell you all I know of Jacko's history, for you must think he has been badly brought up.

Jacko is more than a hundred years old. He was once the property of a heathen chief, and was worshipped. I suppose Jacko is about as good as any other heathen gods or idols; which is not saying much, however, for either. The chief when converted gave Jacko to a missionary, and the missionary brought him with him to this country, and gave him to a friend in a certain county in this country, and the friend gave him to his present master, who lives in a certain village in this county, and that master's house stands in a certain garden in that village; and there, as I have already told you, Jacko lives.

Now this is my story of Jacko. I am afraid you will think he is not a very amiable fellow. But he has his good qualities: he is fond of some people, you see, and his fondness is in return for kindness; which is a very good point, for it seems like gratitude. Perhaps very many of his bad qualities come from his having been made too much of in his own country—spoilt, in fact; which is no better for macaws, I dare say, than it is for children. There, however, as I have said, is my story of Jacko; and if you can find out the name of the county in which is the village, and the name of the village in which is the garden, and the name of the master whose house stands in that garden, and to whom Jacko belongs, then you may see this wonderful bird for yourself; and there also you may see this wonderful bird's master, who is to my mind more wonderful still, because he has had his nose, as I told you, in Jacko's great beak, and has not had it bitten off.

THE STORY OF THE COMMON WILLOW-PATTERN PLATE.

(Concluded from page 343.)



IN the meantime, the lovers had retired to a humble tenement at no great distance from the mandarin's establishment, and had found safety in the concealment afforded to them by the former handmaid of Koong-see, who had been discharged for allowing Chang to meet his love in the gardens of her former home.

The husband of this handmaid, who worked for the mandarin as a gardener, and Chang's sister, were witnesses of the betrothal and marriage of the fugitives, who passed their time in close concealment, and never appeared abroad except after nightfall.

From the gardener they learned the steps taken by their pursuers, and were able to elude them for a considerable time; but at last, when the mandarin issued a proclamation, that if his daughter would forsake Chang, and return to her old home, he would forgive her, the gardener showed himself so joyful at the signs of his master's relenting, that suspicion was attached to him, and the poor house in which he resided was ordered to be watched.

The reader will find this house represented in the plate at the foot of the bridge. It is only of one story in height, and of the most simple style of architecture. The ground about it is uncultivated; the tree that grows near is only a common fir; and the whole place has a sad air of poverty, which becomes more striking when the richly ornate and sheltered mansion on the other side of the bridge is compared with it.

It having been agreed that, in case any suspicion fell upon the house, the young gardener should not return at the usual hour, Chang and his wife knew that all was not right when he did not enter at the usual time in the evening. The gardener's wife also saw strange people loitering about, and in great sorrow she told her fears to the newly-married pair.

Later in the evening a soldier entered the house, and after having read the proclamation of the mandarin, he pointed out the great advantages which would arise to all parties who assisted in restoring Koong-see, and bringing Chang to justice. He told her, moreover, that the house was guarded at the front, and reminded her that there could be no escape, as the river surrounded it in every other direction.

The attachment of the gardener's wife to her old mistress was, however, strong enough to enable her to retain her presence of mind, and after appearing exceedingly curious as to what reward she would obtain if she was successful in discovering Chang, she led him to suppose that he was not there, but in a friend's house, to which she would conduct him if he would first obtain a distinct promise of reward for her, in the handwriting of the mandarin and the duke.

The soldier promised to obtain the writing, but told her, to her great disappointment, that he must leave the guard about the house. She dared not object to this, or she felt she would be found out; but she complained loudly of the rough soldiers being left without their commanding officer, and thus she gave the trembling lovers the opportunity of overhearing what was passing, and of learning the danger in which they were placed.

As soon as the officer had gone, a brief conference was held between the lovers and their protector. A few minutes—an hour at most—was all they could call their own. A score of plans were suggested, examined, and cast aside. There was the suspicious guard, who were ordered to let no person, under any circumstances, pass in front; and behind was the broad, rapid river. Escape seemed impossible; and, for Chang at least, detection and arrest were death. To attempt to fight through the guard was madness in a man unarmed—and what would become of Koong-see? What was to be done? It was almost impossible to swim the roaring river when it was most quiet—now it was swollen with the early rains. But the river was the only chance.

'But you will be seen, and be butchered in the water before you climb the other bank,' suggested the gardener's wife.

'It is my only chance,' said Chang, as he stripped off his loose outer garment commonly worn by the higher classes, or by those who seek for literary honours.

Koong-see clung to him, but his resolution was firm, and bidding her be of good cheer—that he

would get across, and come again to her, he jumped from the window into the stream below, with Koong-see's promise of constancy ringing in his ears.

The struggle was frightful, and long before Chang had reached the middle of the torrent, Koong-see fainted, and saw no more.

Her faithful attendant laid her upon a couch, and seeing the colour returning to her lips, gazed out of the window on the river. Nothing of Chang was to be seen; the rapid torrent had carried him away. Where?

Time passed on, every moment seeming an age, and darkness began to come down upon the earth.

The poor gardener's wife hung over her mistress, and dreaded her questions when consciousness would be restored.

The officer had been absent long enough to visit the duke and mandarin. Hark! he was even now knocking at the door.

The soldier knocked again before the gardener's wife could bring herself to leave Koong-see, but no other course was left to her; and scarcely knowing why, she securely closed the door of the apartment behind her, and drew the screen across to conceal it.

The soldier rudely questioned her as to her delay in opening the door, and showed her the document which he had obtained, in which large sums of money and the emperor's favour were promised to any person who should give up Chang, and restore Koong-see to her father.

She made pretence that she could not read the writing; and having given the soldier some spirit made from rice, she managed to pass some time in delays. When the officer became impatient, she told him that she thought it would be useless to attempt to catch Chang till it was quite dark, when he would be walking in a neighbouring rice-ground. Two hours were thus whiled away, when the officer was called out by one of the men under him, who told him that a messenger had arrived from the Ta-jin, inquiring why the villain Chang had not been brought before him, and requiring an answer from the commanding officer himself. This gave the gardener's wife time to see what had become of Koong-see.

She had fancied she heard some noise in the apartment, and she pushed the screen aside, opened the door, and peeped into the room. Koong-see was not there. There were marks of wet feet upon the floor and upon the narrow ledge of the window, to which she rushed. A boat had just been pushed off into the river, and in it, there was no doubt, were her mistress and her husband, the brave Chang. The darkness concealed them from the eyes of friends or enemies, as the rushing river carried them rapidly away.

The gardener's wife gently closed the window, and hastily removed all traces of what had happened; she then cheerfully returned to the other part of the house, and waited for the officer. He came, and commanded his soldiers to search the house; which they did most willingly, as upon such occasions they possessed themselves of everything valuable.

Their search was in vain, however, for they neither found traces of the fugitives nor anything worth stealing. The jewels were with Chang upon the



Here the young pair resolved to settle down in peace.

river, and the gardener was but a poor man. They then visited the rice-ground, but were equally unsuccessful there.

They suspected that the woman had played them a trick, but she, in a very innocent manner, persuaded the officer that she had been imposed upon, and that she was sorry she had given him so much trouble.

The boat with its precious cargo floated down the river all that night, requiring no exertion from

Chang, who sat silently watching at the prow while his young wife slept in the cabin.

When the grey of early morning peeped over the distant mountains Chang still sat there, and the boat was still rapidly carried onwards by the current. Soon after daylight they entered the main river, the Yang-si-te-keang, and their passage then became more dangerous, requiring considerable management and exertion from the boatman. Before the sun



The Cat and the Cheese.

was well up they had joined crowds of boats, and had ceased to be singular, for they were in company with persons who lived wholly upon the river, but who had been engaged in taking the usual tribute of salt and rice to his imperial majesty's treasury.

To one of the boatmen Chang sold a jewel, and from another he purchased some food with the coin.

Thus they floated onwards for several days towards the sea, but having at length approached a

place where the mandarins examined all boats outward bound Chang moored his floating home beside an island in the broad river.

It was but a small piece of ground, covered with reeds; but here the young pair resolved to settle down, and to spend the rest of their days in peace.

The jewels were sold in the neighbouring towns, in such a manner as not to excite suspicion; and with the funds thus procured the persevering Chang

was enabled to obtain all that was necessary, and to purchase a free right to the little island. It is said that Koong-see with her own hands assisted in building the house, while her husband brought the island into a high state of cultivation.

On referring again to the plate, the reader will find the history of the island recorded by the simple artist. The ground is broken up into lumps, to tell of recent cultivation; and the trees around it are smaller in size, showing their youth. The diligence of Chang is proved by the manner in which every scrap of ground which could be added to the island is reclaimed from the water. To tell this, narrow reefs of land are seen jutting out into the stream.

Chang having gained a competence by his cultivation of the land, wrote a book upon agriculture which won him great reputation in the province where he then resided, and was the means of securing the patronage of the wealthy literary men of the neighbourhood for his children—one of whom became a great sage after the death of his father and mother, which occurred in the manner now to be related.

The reputation of Chang's book, if it gained him friends, revealed his whereabouts to his greatest enemy, the Ta-jin, or duke, whose passion for revenge was not abated. Nor did the duke long delay. Having waited upon the military mandarin of the river station, and having sworn that Chang was the person who had stolen his jewels, he obtained an escort of soldiers to arrest Chang; and with these the Ta-jin attacked the island, having given secret instructions to seize Koong-see and kill Chang without mercy.

The peaceful inhabitants of the island were quite unprepared; but Chang, having refused the party admittance, was run through the body and mortally wounded. His servants, who were much attached to him, fought bravely to defend their master; but when they saw him fall, they threw down their weapons and fled.

Koong-see, in despair, rushed to her apartments, which she set on fire, and perished in the flames.

The gods (so runs the tale) cursed the duke for his cruelty with a foul disease, with which he went down to his grave unfriended and unpitied. But in pity to Koong-see and her lover they were transformed into two immortal doves, emblems of the constancy which had rendered them beautiful in life and undivided in death.

THE CAT AND THE CHEESE.

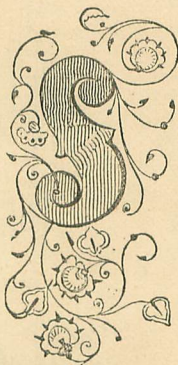
A POOR old man—whose usual fare
Was bread and cheese, with none to spare—
Was plagued with mice, who came in scores
To feed upon his frugal stores.
He got a Cat, not overfed,
And shut her, when he went to bed,
Inside his cupboard; where, 'tis true,
She killed a daring mouse or two:
But then, impatient to appease
Her hunger, she ate all the cheese.

Thus men, through rash attempts at cure,
May make worse ills than they endure.

W. R. E.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 340.)



UDDENLY she paused, and turning towards me with a proud, angry look, she pointed to the scene before us.

There they were, those two giddy children, not gathering the gooseberries at all, but looking for all the world as though they were set up to be models for a bit of Watteau china. Ambrose, with a merry, boyish smile on his handsome face, had his hands full of the flowers he had brought with him, and of which he had

gravely learnt the names; but he was throwing them at Sylvia, who with blushing cheeks, and her hair disordered by the wind into sunny curls, was holding out her rustic hat as a shield.

It was as pretty a picture as I ever set eyes on, but truly I had no thought for that in the confusion I felt to think that my Lady Coppinger should thus see Sylvia for the first time, as unlike a town-bred girl as well might be. I would have called to her to bid her remember her manners and do her proper reverence, but my lady made me stern signs to keep silence, and then led the way back up the nut coppice and through the garden to the house, never once looking back at me, who did follow her, feeling very guilty, though I scarce knew of what.

When we had reached the oaken parlour the storm broke forth. Madam in her imperious way did motion me to take a seat, while she stood erect before me, trembling with fierce rage.

'In truth, Mistress Millicent, you have played a pretty game, which well beseems your years and character! My poor Ambrose! Simple, innocent lad! To think how he must have been led on by that forward, designing chit, to demean himself thus! And that *you*, Mistress Millicent, and the Rector too, for aught I know, should encourage such unseemly conduct, and lay a trap to catch him for your penniless niece!'

This was more than I could bear, even from my Lady Coppinger, who had always spoke her mind to me since we were girls together, and as I rose to answer her my heart was full of anger.

'Madam,' I replied, 'you wrong me cruelly with your doubts; but of that I would take little heed, had you not laid suspicion on my brother, who you well know to be the very soul of honour, who would think scorn to do a deed which all the world might not see. And what do you accuse us of?'

'Of stealing my son from me!' interrupted my lady, the angry tone of her voice half broken with sobs. 'Since he came home, I have scarce seen him: each day some new excuse takes him away, till at last I can bear it no more, and I follow him here and discover all your treachery. Yes, Mistress Millicent,' she added, checking my words, for I would have spoken, 'I trusted you as my own self. You knew our plans for Ambrose, how we had hoped that he would marry Anne Longworth the heiress

of Hillingdon, and so join the two estates. But you have not won yet!

As she spoke the whole truth flashed across my mind, and my anger changed to pity, for I seemed to understand poor madam's jealousy.

How blind we had been! Here was this fine young fellow, used to an active, stirring life, contentedly coming to us day after day, joining in our quiet country pursuits, and we had thought it was all from love of knowledge and respect for his old friends! And that, too, when another reason was not far to seek!

As I sought to call the past to mind, and remembered Sylvia's bright smiles and pretty ways, a new misgiving came over me,—that through my neglect poor Sylvia had learnt to love young Ambrose, and now they should be parted for ever!

This thought gave me courage, and I drew near to Lady Coppinger, who was rising as if to depart, and said,—

'Dear madam, this is a new thought to me; perchance I might have been on the watch before, but surely you should have spoken your mind to your son himself. If what you say be true, and these young people take pleasure in meeting, yet is it fair to call Sylvia "a forward and designing chit," and still speak no word of blame to Ambrose?'

My lady was silent for a minute, and when she spoke it was in a gentler tone.

'Nay, Millicent, you know well that Ambrose hath the Coppinger spirit, and if he sets his mind on aught it were vain to try and turn him. But I have designs; I see a plan. And now farewell, for Sir Gilbert will look to see me early. Forgive me my angry words,' she added, as she took my hand.

We had crossed the hall together, and reached the broad porch, when, as it fell out, who should meet us at the open door but Ambrose, sedately carrying the basket full of gooseberries, and Sylvia a few steps behind.

The lad started with surprise at the sight of his mother, but recovering himself on the instant he said,—

'Look, mother, how well employed we have been, Mistress Sylvia and I, gathering the fruit for good Mistress Millicent's wine!'

'Truly Ambrose,' she replied, in her stateliest way, 'you must have missed your vocation when you became a soldier rather than a day-labourer.'

Meantime poor Sylvia stood in the doorway, scarce knowing which way to look, with this grand madam in her brocaded dress looking so stern and taking no heed of her.

'Sylvia, my child, come hither and speak to my Lady Coppinger,' I said, that she might not feel hurt. But I need not have given myself concern, for the town breeding of Mistress Sylvia stood her in good stead.

Smiling through her blushes, she caught her gown on each side, and made a deep reverence of such infinite grace that even my lady looked surprised, as though wondering where the girl had taken such a courtly air, and made her a grand courtesy in return. Ambrose and I could scarce forbear smiling; it was so like two great court ladies at the play. Then, like a dutiful son, he came forward, and gave his arm to

attend madam to her chariot; and as she would have him return with her he bid me farewell, but when he looked round for Sylvia the girl was nowhere to be seen.

Thus came to an end that eventful visit, and when I had watched the chariot out of sight down the lane, I sat down sorely troubled in mind to meditate on what it behoved me to do.

In our happy, peaceful world, it seemed as though a cloud had come over the sky, and left us all in blackness and darkness.

Should I talk to Sylvia, and find out what harm was done there? or would it the better become me to seek counsel from brother John's wisdom?

No! the thought of that made me smile. Dear, kind, unworldly man! Had it been any matter of book-learning, anything to do with religion or politics, who could give better advice than John? But a little trifling love-matter, not to be solved by Latin or dictionaries, would puzzle him mightily.

So I settled in my mind that I would seek an occasion to talk with Sylvia; and meanwhile it was no use to sit and grieve with folded hands, so I called the maids and gave all due diligence to the gooseberry wine.

As for Sylvia, I saw no more of her till the hour of supper, and then her eyes were red and swollen as though with tears; but she was gay and full of merry talk, so that I could not tell what way her thoughts went. Then my brother read to us a quaint story in the latest paper of the *Spectator*,* of how many people did bring all their griefs and calamities and throw them down in a heap, like so many burdens. But they must needs each take up another in place of the one they had cast away, and it did give us cause for much wise talk to learn how each one found his neighbour's burden so much heavier than he had thought.

'But how did you get the paper so soon, brother?' I asked; 'for it is but two days old.'

'Squire Longworth of Hillingdon was riding by, and he did bring it me from Uxbridge.'

At the mention of this name a new thought came into my mind.

'Did he say how fared Mistress Anne, his daughter?' I inquired.

'I did not think to ask,' said John. 'Perhaps it were well for you to go and pay her a visit with Sylvia, who needs to have friends of her own age.'

'Yes,' I replied; 'and there is the more reason in this case, as Mistress Anne may be one day the lady of Herdington Manor; for you well know, John, how Sir Gilbert and Lady Coppinger have long ago settled the match for Ambrose.'

As I spoke the words, I gave one glance across the table at Sylvia, and repented me the same moment that I had been so hasty.

The girl had first blushed crimson, and then the colour slowly faded from her cheeks, leaving her as pale as death.

Ah, me! there was no need to ask how matters stood; the poor child had betrayed her secret, and all my warnings would come too late.

(To be continued.)



"With a proud, angry look, Lady Coppinger pointed to the scene before us."

Chatterbox.

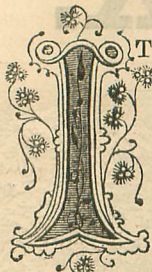


Mistress Millicent overhearing Sylvia's conversation in the Arbour.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 351.)

CHAPTER IV.



It was a hot July that year, and all the gardens were parched and dried up. The long summer days came and went, and brought but little change to us, save that my brother did look out each morning more eagerly for news from town, where rumour said the poor queen was lying in grievous sickness, and the physicians did give but little hope of her recovery.

Who should come after her? That was all the talk now, for there were many that held that the Stuarts would be the strongest party, even going so far as to say that Queen Anne herself had a mighty fondness for her brother James, and would make him her successor if she had her way.

But all these weighty matters of the State did not affect me so nearly in our quiet Rectory as that which fell out beneath my own eyes.

I was sore troubled and concerned about Sylvia, as I marked how the colour faded from her cheeks, and she grew to be silent and changeful in temper: one time of a sad, peevish humour, and then again talking gaily and loudly, as tho' she would hide her secret trouble, which she was too proud to tell, even to me.

Ah! I saw it all, and could read the story plainly, till it made my heart ache. I noted how Sylvia would sit for hours together in the little summer-house which did give a view of the road: how she started and changed colour at the sound of a horse-man; but, alas! it was all disappointment, for day by day passed away and Ambrose came not.

I, too, missed the lad sadly, with his bright face, and merry voice, and courtly air, bringing a little flavour of the great world into our rustic dwelling. And it was the more strange, too, that we had no news from Herdington Manor, for in the old times my Lady Coppinger's wrath had wont to be sharp and short, and we two had ever been firm friends.

One day, when my duty had called me to see certain poor sick folks in the village, it did amaze me on my coming home to meet our good Abigail at the door of the coach road.

'What is it, Abigail?' I asked, in alarm. 'Hath any untoward thing befallen?'

'Nay, mistress,' she replied; 'yet be I mighty glad to see you back. Do you call to mind that young spark who, by good luck, did come up with Master Ambrose, when the highwaymen beset us on the Heath?'

'Yes, surely, Abigail, I remember him well; but what of him?'

'It's for no good purpose, I'll warrant, that he must needs come hither nigh upon an hour ago, dressed out in all his fine clothes like a popinjay!' cried the indignant maid, who had taken the same prejudice against this aforesaid Master Ned Prior as I had done.

'But what of that?' I asked, rather impatiently. 'Doubtless he did but ride over with news for the master.'

'No, indeed! It was the mistress he wanted; and when I told him you be gone to take the physick to old Dame Cotterill, quoth he, "Then Mistress Sylvia Lennox will suit my errand." And by ill luck he sees her white dress yonder in the coppice, and without saying "By your leave," or "with your leave," off he goes to her, and they be talking as thick as thieves in the arbour ever since.'

Now I liked not this news one whit better than Abigail had done, but prudence bid me say nothing, so I made my best haste towards the coppice. As I drew near the shady seat I could hear Sylvia's voice speaking in low, eager tones:—

'If he had but writ me one line! But you will give me news of him often, Master Prior?'

'Yes, madam, so oft as my affairs do bring me to and fro betwixt the town and country.'

At this moment I did, by my coming, break off the conversation, for tho' it would have contented me much to hear more, yet I would not demean myself to listen to that which was not meant for my ear.

Master Prior did start up in confusion at sight of me, but Sylvia caught my hand and said,—

'This gentleman brings us tidings from London, Aunt Millicent, and hath a letter for you, the which he would deliver into your own hands.'

Whereupon the young man greeted me with a flow of civil speeches, and drew from the pocket of his embroidered coat a sealed letter for me, but in so doing he let fall an open sheet to the ground. He hastily stooped, and, crushing it in his hand, returned it to his pocket, but not before I had caught sight of the words, 'To Mistress Sylvia Lennox, writ, as I doubt not, in Ambrose's sprawling, boyish hand, which I knew so well.'

This incident, of the which I thought it wisest to say nought, did but confirm me in my bad opinion of Master Prior, and right glad I was to see him depart, and be left at liberty to read my letter. It was a short note from Ambrose, dated from London, two weeks before, and telling me that he had been sent thither so hastily that he had not been able to come and bid us all farewell, at the which he was mightily grieved.

That was all; but when I came to talk to Sylvia, I found that this friend, as she called him, of Ambrose, had more than hinted at secret political matters in which both the young men were concerned, and which Sylvia must keep secret on peril, maybe, of their lives.

As she would give me no fuller account, I took but little heed of all this at the time, thinking that it was but a clever trick of this Master Prior to get the girl interested in him.

For my part, I did take all my opinions in politics and such-like grave matters from my brother John; but when a week later, on the 2nd of August, there did come to us tidings of the death of Queen Anne, we, like all the rest of the land, were in a fever of anxiety to know what would happen.

Then it was that Sylvia first startled us by speaking out openly on the side of the Stuart Pretender, 'King James,' as she must needs call him, till my brother spoke out in a sharp way, such as I scarce ever heard him before, and told her that in his house he would have no rebels against King George.

Meantime events made rapid progress. The king had come over from Hanover, and landed at Greenwich with the prince on the 18th of September: and such prompt, firm steps did the Protestant party take, that no serious trouble seemed like to follow, though it was whispered that the Jacobite party was but taken by surprise, and that plots were going on all over the country.

This I know, too, that if ever there was a young fellow fit to hatch treason it was that Ned Prior, who was for ever coming and going to all the country squires about; and he never failed to bring some fresh budget of news to John, who, good, easy man! quite looked for his coming, suspecting no evil. Sylvia, too, always schemed to have some talk with him, and they smiled at my dislike, as tho' it were but an old woman's prejudice.

But I held my own opinion, and would gladly have put a stop to his visits altogether, for it seemed to me that he and Sylvia had some secret between them, which drew the young people far too much together for my liking.

The autumn days were growing chill and wintry, when one morning there came a messenger to me from my Lady Coppinger, with a most fervent, courteous request, that I would go to see her without delay, she being indisposed, and that I would moreover not fail to bring my niece with me.

It was so long since any news had come to us from the Manor House that I felt strangely moved and excited by this pressing appeal, and made all haste to get me ready. As to Sylvia, when I did show her the letter she said, 'Nay, she wanted not to go where folks would not make her welcome;' but after a while she came to a better mind, and took no small care in adorning herself in one of her modish dresses, with all her richest trinkets.

So we set off in the old chariot, which seldom saw the light, except for grand occasions, and jolted along in silence for a time, till Sylvia looked up at me and said,—

'What may be the reason of this sudden graciousness, Aunt Millicent? My lady was cold and distant enough when last we met.'

Now, in truth, I was sorely puzzled by this question, for unless madam had altered her plans, I could not understand this invitation to Sylvia; and yet I feared to raise false hopes in the girl's mind. But I was spared making an answer, for just then we did come in sight of the house, and Sir Gilbert's hounds all set up a loud barking to make known our arrival.

It was Sylvia's first visit to Herdington Manor, and I could not but note how she looked about and took count of everything.

We were ushered at once into madam's own private withdrawing-room; and as she rose to greet us with outstretched hands, I marked how thin and ill she looked.

'It was good of you to come, Mistress Millicent,' said she, kissing me on the cheek; and then turning to Sylvia she added, with a smile,—

'And now, what shall we find to entertain your pretty niece while we have our dish of gossip? Would she like to take a stroll to the fish-ponds, or would it suit her humour best to rout out some old romance from the library?'

'Oh, the library, if it please you, madam,' said the young girl, eagerly.

Whereupon my lady led us through a short passage into the great oak library, full of ponderous books, black in hues with the wear and tear of centuries. Yet on the tables and strewn about the room were fishing-rods and tackle, guns, spurs, hunting-gloves, and other such furniture, which might have made one deem that the present owner of the manor was more of a sportsman than a scholar.

'See here,' said our hostess, pointing to a lower shelf, 'is Mrs. Lennox's *Female Quixote*, Englished mostly by persons of honour; and here are *Astrea*, *Cleopatra*, *Clelia* and *Cyrus*, and others from whence to make a choice. And now we will ask your pardon for leaving you awhile.'

So saying, madam turned back with me to her private room, and began to pour out all her trouble.

'Tell me, Millicent,' she began, 'have you any news of Ambrose? Does my boy write to you? Do you know where he is?'

Overcome with surprise, I could but shake my head in answer to her eager questions; and then the poor mother, with all her pride broken down, revealed to me her long pent-up misery.

It appeared that on that eventful day when she paid her stately call to the Rectory she had not been able to restrain herself before her son, but had broken forth into reproaches to him for what she named his shameful conduct.

This violent, unjust language, had roused the Coppinger temper in the young man, and he had asserted his right to please himself; yea, and if he were so minded, to ask Sylvia Lennox on the morrow to be his wife.

Upon this Lady Coppinger's anger had known no bounds, and she had sworn that if he saw that girl again before he came of age, she (his mother) would never see or speak to him more till her dying day.

The bitter words were no sooner spoken, she told me, than she repented of them in her heart, though her pride would not let her say so. But the deed was done, and that very night Ambrose had bid his father farewell, finding some pretext for a return to London, which satisfied the easy-going Sir Gilbert.

When the morning came, after a sleepless night of misery, the mother learnt that her son was gone, without a word for her.

Remorse had taken the place of pride, and she would have gone down on her knees to undo her work, but it was too late.

Weeks and months had gone by, yet still no tidings came of him; till at length, worn out with suspense and anxiety, she had sent to us, scarce knowing whether most to hope or fear that Sylvia might have heard from him.

As she told the sad story, my heart did ache for the poor lady, but yet it seemed not to me such a hopeless case.

'Have you full assurance that your niece hath no secret letters or messages from him?' asked she.

Now it troubled me mightily to know how to answer this, when I called to mind all those long mysterious talks with Ned Prior, yet I scarce durst speak of this lest it should make mischief. I considered awhile, and feeling satisfied in the end that



open dealing was ever like to be the safest course, I said,—

‘Let us call Sylvia, and bid her tell us all she knows.’

‘Nay,’ replied my lady, ‘let us not summon the girl abruptly, lest she be alarmed and suspicious; but rather we will discreetly turn the talk upon Ambrose, and so find out the truth.’

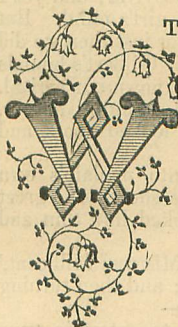
Upon this she rang the bell, and her servant came, looking, like all else in that house, the very pink of neatness in his well-brushed brown coat, and black velvet knee-breeches, and well-powdered bob-major wig.

‘Lovet,’ said his mistress, ‘seek out Mistress Lennox in the oak library, and pray her to join us anon at a dish of tea in the Chinese fishing-temple.’

(*To be continued.*)



THE OLD WELL IN THE COURT-YARD.



WELLS are seldom seen now-a-days, even in the great towns. When they are, it is commonly in neighbourhoods where houses, once tenanted by the wealthy, have now become the abodes of the very poor, who have to draw up their scanty supply of water from the old-fashioned well in the court-yard around which stand their now miserable abodes.

It was in a place of this kind that a thin, haggard woman, stood talking, one sultry evening, to a comfortable-looking man—a contrast in every way to his companion.

‘I will do what I can for you, Mrs. Beverly, he



said; 'and I will promise that the well shall be repaired at once. It is in a very bad way, certainly. I should recommend you to be careful in getting water up. It shall be repaired to-morrow, certainly. Good evening, Mrs. Beverly. I will not forget you.'

He spoke in a cheerful voice, and then with a nod he turned and left the court-yard.

The poor woman went back to her washing, which was standing near. She went on rubbing, rinsing, and wringing, until her work was done; and then, emptying her tub, she took it up and carried it home. Home, did I say? What a home it was! Two rooms at the top of one of the miserable houses round the court-yard, in which she, with her husband and

three children, existed. A squalid home; and yet there was some happiness in it, as there always is where there is love.

A little boy and girl sat in the middle of the floor in one of the rooms playing at bo-peep behind their pinafores. They both scrambled to their feet at the sight of their mother, and ran towards her. She, poor thing! tired though she was, lifted first one, then the other, up in her arms, kissed them, and sent them off, quite contented, to finish their game, while she began to prepare the tea. This scanty meal was soon ready; and Mrs. Beverly sat down, evidently waiting for some one.

Before long a boy of about fifteen came into the room; and then they all sat down to the scanty tea.

'I have got a promise from the landlord, Joe,' said Mrs. Beverly, 'to have the well mended to-morrow.'

'Have you, mother?' said Joe. 'I'm glad it's going to be done before any one has gone down to the bottom.'

'So am I,' replied his mother; and then she added sadly,—'Not but what I sometimes think I could rest as easy down there as anywhere else.'

'And what should I do up here without you?' said Joe, tenderly; and he kissed his mother as he spoke. Just then there was a heavy step outside, slowly ascending the stairs. The mother and son listened; and then exchanged glances, and Mrs. Beverly whispered:—

'Shut the children in the next room, Joe, and then come back.'

He did as she bade him. As he returned the door opened, and a man entered. The woman looked up frightened: the boy crept round to her side.

A glance at the man shows that he has been drinking; and the secret of the family's poverty is told at once.

'I want something to drink, wife,' he said, as he sat down on a rickety chair.

'There is nothing in the house, Joseph,' said his wife, gently.

'Then I'll have some water,' said the man.

'There is no water in the house,' said his wife.

'There's the well,' said her husband. 'There's water in the well. Joe, go and draw some.'

'Joe can't draw water to-night,' said Mrs. Beverly. 'It is too late—it is nearly dark.'

'Why can't he?' said her husband, angrily. 'Get me some water, Joe, quick! I'm burning with thirst.'

'I shan't come to any hurt, mother, never fear,' the boy whispered.

He ran down the stairs into the yard as he spoke, and his mother followed behind. She stood at the door while he drew the water, and waited until the bucket came up full.

'Be careful how you unhook it,' she called out.

The words were hardly out of her lips when one of the stones under the lad's foot gave way. She saw her boy struggle to regain his footing. She saw his head and hands for a moment over the brink.

With a piercing cry the unhappy mother ran to the edge of the well, and, at the risk of her own life, gazed into the depth below.

The father heard his wife's cry and looked out of the window. He saw a policeman come hurrying into

the courtyard; he saw the neighbours come flocking to the spot where his wife stood wringing her hands, and trying to explain what had happened. He went stumbling downstairs to join in the excitement. A shout reached his ears as he drew near.

'The rope's broken! the rope's broken!'

Some one came up behind him and laid a heavy hand upon his shoulder.

'Beverly, it is time you were sober, man! It is your boy—your Joe that has fallen into the well!'

'My boy, did you say?' he asked, slowly. 'My Joe?' And then he pushed into the midst of the crowd.

Two men, one prostrate on the ground, the other bent over him, were holding on with all their strength to the rope, which had broken in two while being wound up. The mother stood just behind them, her horror-stricken face being lit up by the glare of a tallow candle, which the policeman had brought from one of the houses, and held over the brink of the well.

'It's a bad go!' said the policeman, as Beverly came forward. 'The boy is in the bucket, but the rope has broken, and we can't draw him up.'

'Hold on, mates, till I borrow a rope from the builder's yard,' cried Beverly, as he ran off.

In five minutes he was back with a rope, which he tied firmly round the windlass.

'I'm going hand-over-hand down this rope, and if you'll hold on, mates, a bit longer, I'll tie this end to the bucket, and we'll both come up together. When I halloo you wind us up.'

'It can't be done!' cried out several voices. 'You are throwing away your life! You'll never come up again if you go down!'

'Then me and my boy will lie at the bottom of the well together,' replied Beverly. 'It was me that sent him down here, and it will be me that will try and pull him up.'

Slowly and carefully Beverly let himself down into the well. Two or three men stood at the handle, ready to turn at the appointed signal; the two men holding the rope were assisted by fresh helpers, and they held it firm and fast. The mother stood by with clasped hands. At last there was a muffled shout from the bottom of the well. The men began to turn the handle; heavily it creaked round. After some moments of suspense the man appeared, clinging to the rope, the boy in the bucket. They reached the top. Beverly crawled safely out of the well over the crumbling edge, and then the other men got the lad safely landed.

As the boy, faint from the long strain, was lifted out, there were anxious questions whether he was dead or alive.

'Alive!' answered Beverly; then he added, 'Thanks to you, mates, for your help;' and then he carried Joe upstairs into their own room.

'Carrie, my girl,' he said to his wife, as he laid his boy down upon the bed, 'you'll never see me the worse for liquor again. The good God has given us back our Joe, and for the future I hope to be a better father to him.'

'Then it will be like the dragging of us all out of a well,' said his wife. 'It is the one thing wanting to make us happy, and if you keep your promise, I reckon our boy will never be sorry that he fell into the well.'

The next day the well was repaired, but the Beverleys did not stay long in the courtyard to draw water from it.

Joe soon recovered from the shock he had sustained, and the altered habits of the father so improved the circumstances of the family that in a short time they were able to return again to the neighbourhood which his sad sin had caused them to leave in poverty and disgrace.

QUILL.

THE INDUSTRY OF THE ANT.

IN a recent lecture Sir John Lubbock spoke of the habits of ants, and his experience as to their steadiness, perseverance, and industry. On the 13th of last July, at a quarter past six o'clock in the morning, he said, he put an ant in some honey. After sipping at it some time she went to her nest, and not finding her way back to the honey she wandered about till seven o'clock, when she hit upon the honey. After that she returned to the nest and back to the honey without any difficulty, and kept going backwards and forwards about every quarter of an hour, until 1.50 p.m., when he became tired of watching. That showed a great amount of industry on her part. Then as to the power of communication said to be possessed by ants. He took some long pins, which he thrust through some cards up to the heads, and then stuck the pins in a board. Upon the cards he placed some honey and put an ant upon them. Upon other pins he placed cards where there was no honey, and the result was that, in returning, the ants brought others with them, and in a great majority of cases the ants went up the pins upon which the cards with honey were placed, and avoided those upon which there was no honey. It may have been that they were hunting each other by scent, but that was a point which required to be cleared up by further observations. It often happened that an ant which had been put to the honey came back from the nest with one friend; sometimes there were more, and in some cases as many as twenty ants returned with the single ant which had gone from the honey to the nest.

THE TREE PUZZLE.

WHAT'S the sociable tree and the dancing tree,
And the tree that is nearest the sea?
The most yielding tree, and the busiest tree,
And the tree where the ships may be?
What's the tell-tale tree, the chronologist's tree,
And the tree that is warmly clad?
The schoolboy's restraint, and housemaid's tree,
And the tree that leaves me sad?
The respectable tree and the joiner's trees,
And the tree that might shake your hand;
The coldest tree and the ugliest tree,
And the tree that gives word of command?
What's the tree that nor warms nor lights you,
The tree that your wants would supply;
The tree that to travel invites you,
And the tree that forbids you to die?

The answer will be given in next number.

SAUNTERING JOE.

JOE'S mother is a widow thin,
And trying hard her bread to win,
And one of six is Joe;
A lad who well could earn his meat,
And clothe himself from head to feet—
It is a fact, I know:
But for one fault—the lad will stay,
When on an errand, half the day,
At every sight and show;
Though Conscience says, 'Away! away!
Such sort of work will never pay,
That's certain, Sauntering Joe!'

Joe's not a thief—he does not swear—
Hard words with patience he can bear—
He dearly loves his mother:
He'll nurse the baby well and long,
And keep her good with play and song:
He'll share his pence and sugar-stick
With Clara, Bobby, Kate, and Dick,
Just like a noble brother.
But yet he gives the widow pain,
Who sometimes fears her toils are vain,
Her scoldings and embraces;
For Joe, a lad without a beard,
Engaged has been, and then cashier'd,
In one-and-twenty places!

Such shifting work shows something wrong,
And so she wonders, much and long,
Why Joe can never stay:
'O how is it?' she says with tears,
'Two places served me fifteen years,
One serves him scarce a day!'
When he is taxed, he will admit
He loiters now and then a bit,
If one may call it so;
But if he stops at any sight,
He hurries on with all his might
To make it up—it is not right
To call him Sauntering Joe!

But Joe, I'm sure, is not aware
What time he squanders everywhere,
At every sight he sees;
Shop-windows—chimneys in a blaze—
A band—a squad of gallant greys—
A cab-horse on his knees.
Come, Joe, let those small pugilists
Go squaring on with dirty fists,
And stay not for the end;
That honey's sweet—that ham is pink—
That lemonade looks good to drink—
That top *would* spin, I know you think,
But hurry on, my friend.

Be blind to all but honour bright,
Do all your tasks with all your might,
An arrow from a bow;
So you shall rise to better things,
And stand before the face of kings,*
And taste the sweets of diligence;—
Then wake up like a lad of sense,
No longer Sauntering Joe! G. S. O.

* 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.'—Prov. xxii. 29.



Sauntering Joe.

Chatterbox.



Abigail putting the last touches to her mistress' head-dress.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 356.)



OVET bowed and withdrew. Madam then led the way through the verandah to the garden, which was the one thing that ever made me feel tempted to jealousy.

Oh that garden! it was a perfect delight, with its broad gravel-walks, its smoothly kept bowling-green, the long alleys shaded by trees and divided by trimly clipped hedges, the choice herb plantation, and the fish-ponds, beside of which was the snug

chamber built in the fashion of a Chinese temple.

There we sat down, but had not waited long ere Sylvia tripped up, full of pleased amazement at the quaint conceit. It was a rare sight to note how the woman of fashion brought all her choice wit and lively talk to charm and win the young girl. Never had I known her so gay and sparkling even in her happiest days as now, when her heart was heavy with a weary load of sorrow.

She had been telling of the last masquerade at Ranelagh, which Ambrose had described to her, when suddenly pausing, she added:—

‘But my son hath been remiss of late in writing to his old mother; I pray you tell me, Mistress Sylvia, when last you heard of his welfare?’

She spoke the words so simply and pleasantly as though it were the most natural thing in the world for the young people to hear one from the other.

Sylvia blushed, and replied in a low tone,—

‘Your son hath never writ to me, madam; but his friend, Master Prior, hath told me that he is well in health.’

‘Prior!’ exclaimed Lady Coppinger. ‘Ay, to be sure, it was that young gallant he brought back with him from town! And can you tell me, Mistress Sylvia, where this Ned Prior lodgeth?’

‘No, madam,’ replied the girl simply; ‘but I have heard him say that any packet left at the Cocoa-nut Club in St. James’s Street would find him.’

‘Why, Mistress Millicent!’ exclaimed madam, rising to her feet, and speaking in such an excited tone, as startled me beyond measure; ‘do you know that that same Cocoa-nut Club is the very soul and centre of all the Jacobite plots? It is a judgment of me in truth if my poor boy has been led away by traitors. But I must lose no time to sift the matter to the bottom. I pray you think it not ill if I take leave of you with scant courtesy. I would see Sir Gilbert at once.’

So saying, she rose in eager haste and returned to the house, we following at a distance. Seeing how urgent the matter was, I did seek to learn from Sylvia all she knew, but the poor girl did but burst into tears and pray me to spare her, as she had sworn not to betray her friends. This troubled me mightily, and we had a gloomy ride home, for I was in great fear and doubt what my duty was. I durst not tell John, being in dread of his anger against Sylvia, foolish girl! so I resolved at last to take no step till I should have word from my Lady Coppinger.

CHAPTER V.

ONE fine frosty day in February there was unusual stir in our quiet household, maids running to and fro, and all in confusion. There was to be a great banquet that day at Herdington Manor House, to celebrate the coming of age of Ambrose Coppinger, and we were all bidden. All the neighbouring gentlefolk were to be there, and the labourers on the estate would have a dinner in the great barn.

There was to be an ox roast whole, and as my brother John said, with more truth than he wot of in his jest, ‘It is like the feast to welcome home the prodigal son; but here we kill the ox, and not the fatted calf.’

Poor Ambrose! from all I could learn he had been too much like the prodigal in some things, for he had not yet been home all through that long, weary winter.

I could learn nothing for certain, though when I had been to see my Lady Coppinger she showed me a large snow-white French poodle he had brought her back from Paris, and she told me that she hoped matters would be set right before his coming of age.

And now the great day had come, and we were all looking out our fine clothes.

Old Abigail was as excited as any of us; she had brushed up her master’s court suit, polished up his silver buckles, and was tenderly putting the last darn to his best lace ruffles.

Good soul! how she sighed over the creases in my best gown, the olive brocade done about with lace! but they were not to be wondered at for it was so long since I had worn it.

Sylvia, too, needed her help; she had come to ask me which of her pretty modish gowns she had best wear, and I had picked out a white tissue-flowered sack, one of poor old Lady Betty’s last presents.

The girl was flushed and eager, full of suppressed excitement, and I will say that I did look forward with no small anxiety to see the meeting betwixt her and Ambrose.

We were well-nigh ready, the coach was at the door, and Abigail was putting a last touch to my head-dress, when I chanced to see through the half-open door that Phoebe the maid had given a little note into Sylvia’s hand, with some whispered words.

I saw the young girl tear it open, read it with a frowning look, and then crush it in her hand.

It hath ever been my way not to demand that confidence which is withheld from me, but to wait till it doth come unsought.

She said no word to me till we entered the coach, and then the presence of brother John and Abigail was enough to check her, had she wished to confide in me.

But as we stept out into the court-yard, which was full of bustle with all the chariots arriving, my eyes fell on a crumpled bit of paper under our feet. I took it up and read at a glance:—

‘Good Mistress Sylvia,—I do pray you of your kindness to meet me this day, at twelve of the clock, when all the folks will be busied in the barn, at the little coppice behind the Chinese Temple at the

Manor House. It is a matter of life and death, but I would risk much for those you wot of.

'This in all haste from your humble servant.

'NED PRIOR.'

So overcome was I with dismay and anger at the reading of this that I could scarce hide my feelings, as I hurried on after John and Sylvia, who had been too much engaged to notice me.

It was not possible to conceive how the girl, who was deceiving me thus, and having secret meetings, could look me in the face as she did. And yet there she was, full of girlish delight, pointing out to me some of the guests whom she had met before.

'See, Aunt Millicent, there goes my Lady Ancaster in a brocaded lutestring sack, with ruby-coloured ground and white stripes trimmed with gloss. And here, look, close before us is Mistress Almeria—'

'Hush, Sylvia! such talk is not seemly of the company.'

I felt it needful to check her, for the more I thought of her false conduct the more her present levity did vex me.

When we reached the great withdrawing-room, which was already full of guests, I caught sight at once of Ambrose standing by the side of his mother, who looked proud and happy.

What a fine, handsome lad he was, in his embroidered sky-blue coat, and flowered silk waistcoat, and point-lace cravat!

He soon made his way towards us, and took both my hands, greeting me in his old friendly way; but as for Sylvia, he did but make her a cold, distant bow, as to some mere acquaintance.

She returned his greeting with a deep courtesy, but when he had passed on I could see that her cheeks were burning and tears stood in her eyes.

'Ah, me!' I thought, 'what riddles these young folks are, with their whims and their fancies! There is Sylvia, pining away all last summer for the loss of one friend, and now going to meet that hateful Ned Prior! Is she playing fast-and-loose with them both?'

One thing at least I resolved, that I would watch her and try to solve the mystery.

It was all arranged, that when the labouring folks sat down to dinner at twelve, the company should first go to the barn to see them, and after that Sir Gilbert had provided refreshments and a fine band of musick in the central hall.

Now I kept a close watch upon Mistress Sylvia as the time drew near, but she managed to slip away, and then some fine gentleman stayed me with talking, so that it was nigh a quarter past twelve as I passed along the garden alley towards the Chinese Temple.

Just as I reached the thickest part under a yew-tree I heard voices speaking on the road outside, and caught the words,—

'Mind, ten o'clock to-night, sharp! All the company will be gone then, and as we're quite sure of our man we can take him quietly.'

'Yes, sir,' replied another voice.

'And see you keep good watch meantime.'

I stood listening a moment, but all was quiet again, and I hurried softly on, full of dread and wonder.

'Who was to be taken that night, and wherefore?'

As I drew near the Chinese fishing-temple I caught up my dress that it might not rustle, and almost held my breath. What if any one should meet me rambling thus alone in the garden? Would they not think that sober Mistress Alleyn was demented?

At first I could hear nothing; when I did get nigh to the little coppice then low sounds reached me as of one in eager entreaty, but I could not catch sounds of the words till of a sudden Sylvia's voice did break out, sharp and indignant.

(To be continued.)

STORIES OF SIEGES.

V.—QUERÉTARO.



IN the high land of central Mexico, in a little hollow, surrounded on all sides by long, low ridges of hill, lies the town of Querétaro—a picturesque-looking place with its many spires and towers, the little Rio Blanca (White River) flowing past it, and thickets of the splendid-flowering cactus on

the slopes around. It is, as has been said of it, 'the worst place in the world to defend,' as every house in it may be reached by gun-shot from one or other of the surrounding hills; yet this was the place where the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico made his last stand against his enemies. Here it was that he turned to bay, and held out to the end.

One February morning in 1867 the people of Querétaro might have been seen flocking in joyful excitement out of the gates of their city to the crest of the southern hills. Outside the gates the garrison of the town was drawn up, and the streets were decked with flags and garlands.

Soon a body of troops, about 10,000 men, horse and foot, came across the southern ridge in long procession; and a little in advance rode a group of horsemen, among whom one figure attracted all eyes—a tall and rather slight man, with fair hair and beard, and blue eyes, and a kind of winning expression of face. He it was whom they had come to welcome, and as he advanced towards the gate surrounded by the returning crowd, after stopping to receive the greetings of the generals in command of the garrison, he entered the town. 'Viva el Emperador!' (Long live the Emperor!) shouted the people as they crowded round to catch a glimpse of him as he passed. For this was the 'golden-haired stranger from over the sea,' whom, according to an old tradition, Mexico had long waited for as her deliverer, and whom, especially the oppressed Indian population, hailed with delight. The white man with the fair hair had a kindly smile for all his dark 'Indian children.' He rode first to the quarters prepared for him in the town, and after receiving some of the chief inhabitants there, he went on foot to attend a solemn thanksgiving service in the Cathedral.

A few weeks later all the hills round Querétaro were covered by a hostile army. The enemies of Maximilian had closed him in on every side, bent on pursuing him to the death.

The Emperor's fortunes were looking very dark when he occupied Querétaro in February, 1867, glad to have found a friendly town and a garrison of his followers. Maximilian, as perhaps you know, was a brother of the Emperor of Austria. He had left his country and his beautiful home (the Castle of Miramar, on the Adriatic) to go out to Mexico, because he was told that he might do much good there, and put an end to civil war, and that all the nations wished to have him for their Emperor. In much of this he found that he had been deceived. The people of Mexico are of two distinct races; there are the native Mexicans, or Indians, and the Spanish Mexicans, who are the descendants of the Spaniards who conquered Mexico long ago. The Indians are mostly civilised, and Christians; but they have always been much oppressed and ill-treated by the Spaniards. Maximilian found the Indians ready to welcome him joyfully; but among the Spanish Mexicans there was a strong party which had been opposed to his coming; they called themselves 'Liberals,' and wished to have a republic, and not to be interfered with in their tyranny over the Indians. The French Emperor, who had persuaded Maximilian, after repeated refusals, at last to accept the crown, had a large army at this time in Mexico, to keep down these Liberals. But the French soldiers treated the people so badly that everybody hated them; and Maximilian had no power to prevent them from doing so, which grieved him very much.

At last, the French army was suddenly withdrawn, and Maximilian was left at the mercy of his enemies. The French did indeed offer him a passage to Europe in one of their men-of-war; but he would not go. It was against his honour, he said, thus to steal away from his place like a thief, and to leave all his faithful followers to be hunted down by their enemies. His wife, the Empress Charlotte, went to Europe to try and obtain some help there; but he resolved to stay and share the fortunes of those who had been faithful to him. The Liberals had by this time become very strong; they had set up a republic, and elected Juárez as the President; they had a large army and the Emperor but a small one, so that it seemed almost hopeless for him to carry on the war.

Now you will be able to understand the state of things when the siege of Querétaro began.

The Liberal army at first made one great attack on all sides, attempting to take the place by storm, but the garrison fought very bravely and repulsed them; and then they contented themselves with taking possession of the hills all round, and firing into the town, so that no part of it was safe, and the inhabitants were often killed in the streets. The Emperor's quarters were in a building which had been a convent, and was called Santa Cruz. It stood on a rock at one corner of the city, and was more like a fort than a convent, for it had massive stone walls defended by cannon. It had several inner courts, and in front of it was a square called the Plaza de la Cruz. This Santa Cruz was the strongest point of the defences of Querétaro. After

the enemy's first attack had been repulsed the garrison were very busy for a while, doing all they could to improve the fortifications on all sides of the town, but at best it was only a weak and exposed position.

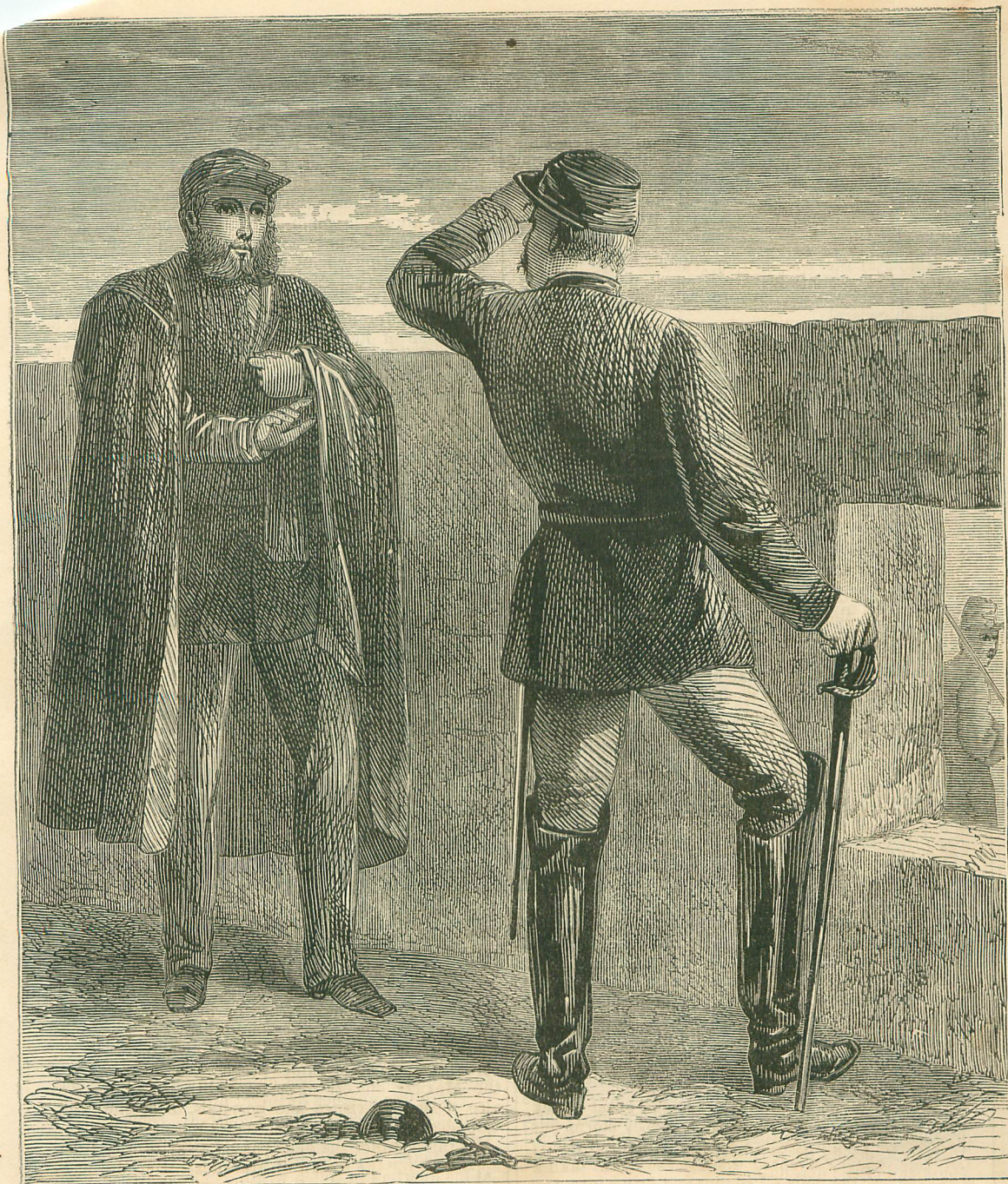
The Emperor's little army was composed partly of Spanish Mexicans and partly of Indians. Chief among the Spaniards were the generals Don Miguel Miramon and Don Leonardo Marquez; the Indian generals were Mejia and Mendez, both devoted to the Emperor's cause, but Mendez was a bitter enemy of Miramon. So that there were elements of discord in the garrison of Querétaro. There was also a regiment of European volunteers (called the Cazadores), commanded by Prince Felix Salm-Salm, a young German officer, who, though he had only lately entered the Emperor's service, was one of the most attached and devoted of his followers.

It was plain that Querétaro could not very long be defended, and to procure help from without to relieve the siege was considered the best thing to be done. Therefore the Emperor determined to send General Marquez to Mexico (the chief town of the empire), to bring all the troops he could collect. Marquez gave his word of honour to return in a fortnight at all risks, whether he was successful or not; and at midnight, on March 23rd, he set out, escorted by a regiment of cavalry, and made his way out through the enemy.

I do not mean to tell you of all the fights that took place in the time of suspense after he was gone, the dashing sallies made by the garrison, generally at night, and all their little successes. Day and night the bombardment went on; shells came crashing into the town, and the soldiers' wives used to run and pick them up, if they did not explode at once, in order that they might get the reward which was offered for bringing them to the artillery stores. One more attack was made by the enemy on the southern gate of the town. They were driven back after a hard fight, and in the last dash after the retreating Liberals the garrison captured a standard, and made a good many prisoners. The Emperor came out to thank the defenders of the gate on the scene of their victory. He was frequently among the troops, and constantly exposed himself to danger. He used often to visit the outposts and trenches, quite alone; by day or by night, he would pass on these dangerous rounds, always speaking kindly to the soldiers, and finding out whether they received their pay and rations properly, for he knew that the Mexican officers often treated them badly. He also constantly visited the hospitals, to comfort the wounded, and see that their wants were attended to.

In this manner the days passed away till the time appointed for the return of Marquez. But Marquez did not return, and no message or tidings of him arrived. Many there were at Querétaro who suspected him of treachery, but the Emperor still believed in him, and waited for him.

Early in April the chiefs of the beleaguered garrison held a council of war. Some advised the Emperor to try to break through the enemy with his whole army, but more were in favour of his escaping as Marquez had done, with an escort of all the remaining cavalry, and seeking himself to the Sierra Gorda.



'The Emperor wishing Salm, "God speed."

The Sierra Gorda is a wild mountain region, east of Querétaro, inhabited by Indians alone. It was Mejia's native place; he had great power there among the Indian tribes, and could answer for it that all his people would rise to defend Maximilian.

The Emperor's answer to this proposal was, that 'it was against his honour to leave the army.' The same chivalrous sense of duty which had kept him in Mexico now prevented him from taking this way of

escape. General Miramon, too, opposed the plan suggested by the Indians, and was in favour of holding out in Querétaro. He and Mendez were at this time on very bad terms.

One day Mendez, meeting Prince Salm in the street, said suddenly to him, 'Do you really mean honestly by the Emperor?'

'What a question!' replied the German. 'Of course I do!'

'Well,' he continued, 'then tell him from me to get as soon as possible out of this mouse-trap, and to beware of Miramon. I am an Indian, and the Emperor knows the faithfulness and devotion of the Indians to him. Mejia and myself will bring him in safety to the Sierra Gorda. If he will not follow my advice, he may depend upon it that we shall all be shot.'

Unfortunately, Mendez accompanied his advice by applying for leave to arrest Miramon, and so everything he said was put down to his enmity against the Spanish general.

Prince Salm, who, with the Cazadores, was always employed by Miramon on any service of especial danger or difficulty, was once ordered to attack a position of the enemy's near the convent of Santa Cruz. He assembled his men at three in the morning on the Plaza de la Cruz, from whence they had to pass out singly through the embrasure of a gun (or opening in the wall made for a cannon's mouth). When Prince Salm, sword in hand, was about to slip out through the narrow opening, he saw in the dim light a figure leaning on the breastwork close by. It was the Emperor, who knowing he was going to lead a very hazardous enterprise, had come to wish him God speed. 'Salm,' he said, 'I wish you success with all my heart. May God protect you!' In many ways like this he showed how much he had at heart the safety of those who fought for him.

By the middle of April provisions were getting very scarce indeed, and it was at last decided that Prince Salm should try to break through and obtain news of Marquez, and, if possible, bring back some troops with him. Miramon sent with him a young general, Moret, a friend of his own. They started at midnight on a bright moonlight night. Darkness would have been better, but time was pressing. Almost as soon as they had got out of the town they had to cross the river, which runs close to it on the north and west. They were obliged to ford it one by one, and while this slow process was going on, they saw signal rockets rising from the enemy's camp. They are discovered, and now there is nothing for it but advancing at a gallop, thinks Salm; but Moret, who is in advance with one regiment, hangs back, and Salm cannot get his men on. Another ten minutes, and they are fired on from both sides. Salm sends a messenger forward to Moret, entreating him to press forward at all hazards. But Moret has already halted, and waits till Salm comes up to him. Then, indeed, it is too late to make a dash. Dense columns of the enemy's infantry have come up. To ride through them is impossible; and under a heavy fire, disappointed and mortified, Prince Salm is forced to retreat, deeply regretting that he had not the sole command of the expedition.

Soon after this, the long-expected tidings of Marquez came at last. Among the deserters who now and then came in to Querétaro from the besieging army there was an Alsatian named Muth, whom Prince Salm received into his regiment. He afterwards sent him out as a spy to try and bring some news of Marquez. With a message to Marquez, written on slips of paper concealed in the soles of his boots, he slipped out one night, and crept through the cactus thicket which sheltered the enemy's out-

posts. There, seeing guns pointed at him, he waved his handkerchief, and reported himself as a deserter from the garrison. It was not discovered that he was a double deserter, and instead of being shot, as he would have been in that case, he was allowed to serve again among the besiegers. After collecting all the news he could, he deserted once more, and on the 25th of April was brought again before Prince Salm. In the enemy's camp, he reported, it was well known that Marquez had been defeated and lost all his army; after which, it seemed, he had turned traitor and gone over to the winning side. All hope of help from without was now gone, and the only thing to be done was to try to break through; for to surrender Querétaro would be certain death to the Emperor and his principal followers.

The plan now was that the garrison should put forth all its strength for one great attack on the enemy, and that, when they were driven back, the Emperor with his whole army should force his way out. Accordingly, at daybreak on the morning of April the 27th, lines of white smoke all along the hills south of Querétaro might have been seen, and then the enemy flying like a flock of sheep before Mendez and his Indians. In the Plaza de la Cruz two cavalry regiments were drawn up, for the escort of the Emperor; everything had been packed up, and all was ready for his departure. When the success of the sally became known, all the bells of Querétaro proclaimed it with joyous peals, and the starving townspeople rushed out to find food in the enemy's camp. The Emperor came out, and rode along the lines lately occupied by the Liberals. Now it would have been easy to take advantage of their panic, and break through; but Miramon (who, though not a traitor, as Mendez thought him, yet did often bad service to the Emperor by his advice) unfortunately was for waiting till a second attack had 'annihilated the Liberals.' This second attack was unsuccessful; the enemy had had time to rally, and the defenders of Querétaro, overpowered by numbers, began to waver and retreat. The Emperor himself was in front of their line, encouraging them by word and example. When he found the case was hopeless he, in a kind of brave despair, refused to retreat, and remained almost alone—a mark for the enemy's bullets, perhaps hoping to find a soldier's death. At last, yielding to the repeated entreaties of his aide-de-camp (Prince Salm), he turned and rode back to the fatal Querétaro, which he was never to leave again. His last chance of escape was gone.

There was another fortnight after that of desperate fighting, frequent sallies, constant bombardment. General Mendez, disgusted at Miramon's advice being taken, reported himself ill, and shut himself up at his quarters in sullen wrath. The provisions were by this time nearly exhausted; there was no food for the horses, except what they could pick up in the streets. Prince Salm had old straw mattresses chopped up for his. The men were on quarter rations. Once they caught a lean ox, which the enemy had driven towards the town. He had a piece of paper between his horns, on which was written, 'that the Liberals had sent them something to eat, in order that they might fall alive into their hands.'

(To be continued.)

PATRIOTS IN HUMBLE LIFE.

IN 1809, at the time when the French marched upon Vienna, a peasant of the neighbourhood was summoned to act as guide to a column of troops. When the proposal was made to him he cried, 'God preserve me from it! That is what I shall never do.'

The officer who commanded the advanced French guards insisted eagerly; the Austrian stedfastly refused. The officer offered him more gold than the poor man had ever seen in his life; but it was useless. In the meantime the bulk of the army arrived; the general was displeased when he found the advanced guards still in this place.

When they told him that the only peasant who knew the road obstinately refused to serve as a guide he had the man led before him, and said to him with a terrible voice, 'You will go and show us the road at once, or I will have you shot.'

'Very well,' replied the peasant calmly; 'you will cause me to die as an honest man, and I shall be saved from betraying my country.'

At these words, the general's anger melted away; he held out his hand to his loyal enemy, and sent him home, saying, 'Ah, well; we will do without a guide.'

After this example of courage in the Austrian peasant, we may tell of the bravery of a drummer, named Fourry, of the town of Sèvres, near Paris.

As he was beating the rappel, by the order of the mayor, to cause the National Guards to return to Paris, at the time of the investment, he met some Uhlans, who ordered him with threats of death to cease. He drummed on, and a soldier blew out his brains.

A gardener of Bongival, Francois Debergne, a widower, and father of three children, was accused of having broken the Prussian telegraph wires five times. He was led before a council of war. As they proceeded to an inquiry to establish his guilt, which had not been well proved, he stopped the president with these words,—'I have cut the telegraphs; and if I were free I would do it again, because I am a Frenchman.'

This heroic answer was the cause of his death, which he met with cheerful courage.

They were noble patriots all three. E. H. C.

ANSWER TO THE TREE PUZZLE.

[See page 359.]

PEAR Tree.
Caper Tree,
Berch (Beach).
Cedar (ceder).
Medlar (meddler).
Bay.
Peach Tree.
Date Tree.
Fir Tree.
Birch.
Broom.

Pine.
The Elder Tree.
Box Tree and Plane Tree.
Palm Tree.
Chili (chilly) Tree.
Plane (plain) Tree.
Mango (Man go!).
Ash Tree.
The Bread-fruit Tree.
Orange (O, range!).
Olive (O, Live!).

PARENT-LOVE OF LINNETS.



HAVE a story to tell of the courage and wit which a small green linnet can display when any harm threatens her young.

In the far north of England stands a large stone house, up the front of which has been carefully trained red and white roses; and they have been growing there so long, that the boughs are quite strong, and they enfold and guard many a little bird's nest. Just under my bedroom window a nest had been built, and I became aware of the fact by the tones of my little son's voice, who exclaimed one morning in a most excited whisper,—

'Why, mother, do look here, at this dear little nest with four eggs! I can almost touch it with my hand.'

I hastened to the window, and there I saw the pretty nest. Soon we heard a fluttering of wings, and back came Mrs. Linnet, settling herself comfortably down, though we went so near: one little quick glance from her bright black eyes was all the notice she took of us.

In due time the eggs were hatched, and both parents took it in turns to watch and wait upon their young. Such a twittering and fluttering I never heard, and such a hungry little crew they were to be sure! Many a half-hour my children amused themselves watching their little friends. They grew stronger and prettier every day, till they grew so bold as to try and perch on the side of the nest, pecking at the twigs till they toppled back again: but I knew in a few short days that they would fly away.

One morning, a few weeks after the nest had been discovered, I happened to come into the room. The windows were open, and I heard a most plaintive sound from the rose-bushes, repeated over and over again, and in so loud a tone that I felt certain more than one bird was weeping and lamenting.

I peeped out of the window into the nest, and saw only three little nestlings. Where was the fourth?

The old birds kept hovering round and round, and then darting at something on the ground. Stretching half out of the window, to see with whom these poor little innocents were waging war, I beheld crouched, ready to spring, a favourite kitten of mine. Its eyes were fixed on a bough just out of reach, on which sat the missing bird, with distended eyes, ruffled feathers, and throbbing breast. Every time Kitty tried to spring one of the parents darted down between her and her intended victim. Which would have conquered in the long run I did not stop to see, but hastening down, I caught Miss Puss, and ran away with her; having secured her safely, I returned—all quite quiet. What had become of my little friend?

I ran upstairs and peeped into the nest, and there I found the truant, being made much of by his little brethren; and as I drew back, not to disturb them, the parent birds broke out into a most joyous duet.

How he was helped back I do not know, and never shall now, for no more accidents happened during the remainder of their nursery life, and in a few days all four little birds flew away.

A. C. W.

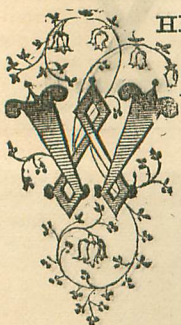


Puss and the Linnets.

Chatterbox.



"Cease your vows, sir! you are a false traitor!"



HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 363.)

AS it but to hear these fine speeches, sir, that you did send me such an urgent message? Think you I would have come one step had I misdoubted that you spoke false, when you said it was a matter of life and death?"

'Nay, sweet Mistress Sylvia,' urged the other, whose voice I recognised for Master Prior, 'they do say that all is fair in love and war, and I vow—'

'Cease your vows, sir!' she replied, more angered than ever: 'you are a false traitor! I hate you, and cry shame on you!'

The fellow seemed amazed, as indeed was I, at the girl's spirit. He made one more effort to win her ear, but she met him with scorn, and turned to leave him.

'Have your will then, my pretty madam,' he cried. 'I did but speak truth, when I said it was matter of life and death to one you wot of. Had you hearkened to my suit, I would have warned him of his danger for old acquaintance sake! Ah! that moves you, does it? Nay then, maybe you will turn pale and tremble when I tell you that the foolish moth hath burnt himself in the candle, and that there is a warrant out against Ambrose Coppinger of Herdington Manor!'

'Have pity, Master Prior!' implored Sylvia. 'Tell me all; will you not warn your friend?'

'Not I!' replied he with a mocking laugh. 'And when he dies a traitor's death, say it was your deed!'

A little shriek of pain, a rustling amongst the trees, and I did hurry forwards in time to take in my arms the poor girl, who was falling in a swoon.

At sight of me the heartless wretch did lose no time in making his escape, for he durst not face my righteous anger.

It was not long ere Sylvia did open her eyes, and at sight of me she started and fell to crying bitterly; but I did soothe and comfort her, deeming it wise not to blame her when in such sad case.

'Dear Aunt Millicent,' she sobbed, 'have you heard? Forgive me! Oh, if I had but trusted you we might have been spared all this!'

Now my first care was for Sylvia, but when I had leisure to collect my thoughts I saw full well that the most pressing matter was my dear lad's danger. And as I thought thereupon a sudden light dawned upon me; I did call to mind the words I had heard from the passers-by on the road,—

'We will take him quietly at ten of the clock this night.'

Yes, there could be no doubt that Ned Prior had spoken the truth, and that poor Ambrose was to be seized by the king's warrant that same evening, and meantime he would be closely watched.

Yet surely there must be some mistake? What could the foolish fellow have done more than any other young bloods about the court to merit the king's displeasure? May be that Sylvia could help me to solve this mystery.

Poor girl! now that matters did thus seem to go against her she was glad to tell me all she knew.

It seemed that this Ned Prior had come to her with fair seeming words as a friend of Ambrose, who could bring news of his welfare. Then he did flatter her girlish vanity by telling her of plots and conspiracies to restore the Stuart family, in the which he and Ambrose had taken part, and the silly maid did think it mighty fine to be trusted with such dangerous secrets.

By such-like cunning devices he had become very intimate with her, and, I doubt not, did flatter himself that it would be no hard task to win her love, and so get himself a rich wife, for we had learnt that winter that my Lady Betty Lennox had left all her property to come to Sylvia after Mistress Anne's death.

It was plain to see, from the girl's confused account, that Ambrose had been led on to do that which had a treasonable colour, but who could have betrayed him if not the false friend, Ned Prior himself?

Meanwhile time was getting on, and I was well-nigh perished with cold in that Chinese fishing-temple, where we had taken refuge.

Our first object was to steal back to the rest of company without calling attention to our absence,—the next matter was to warn Ambrose of his danger, and devise some plan for his escape.

We had the good luck to find that it was not yet the hour of the banquet, and that all the grand folks were scattered about, taking part in divers sports and pastimes.

So we did make our way without observation into the great hall, where the band was playing some very fine airs of the new German musician Handel: so I learnt of Sylvia, who was mighty fond of music, and did play excellently well herself on the spinet.

At last the great bell sounded, and all the company assembled to take their places at the table, which was covered with every dainty that can be thought of. It was no light task for Lady Coppinger to carve such a number of dishes, and for so many guests; but none durst offer to help her, for it would have shown bad breeding.

Madam looked worn and weary, indeed, before the banquet was well-nigh ended, but with her fine courtly manner she did still urge and press her company to taste of every dish.

Meantime I had contrived, with much craft, to get my place by the side of Ambrose, the which, though somewhat above my quality, was yet yielded to me by reason of mine age and old friendship.

As the weary hours passed on and it was growing dusk, so that the lacqueys did have to bring in the lights, which caused some confusion, I did find a moment of noisy talk, in which to whisper to him,—

'Meet me without fail, and in perfect secret, at eight of the clock, in the oaken library.' The young man smiled at my grave manner and said merrily,—

'Why, Mistress Millicent, who would have thought of you making secret appointments? Surely, it would give me mighty great pleasure to meet you anywhere.'

'It is no laughing matter in very truth, my dear lad. There is a warrant out against you. But hush!

make no sign, for who knows if a spy may not even now be sitting at table with us?"

He had turned pale at my words and I could read his thought, for his glance turned towards his mother at once.

'She knows nought,' I whispered: 'it were best not, or her emotion might betray us.'

Then I made all haste to talk aloud on indifferent subjects with a forced gaiety, but thankful indeed was I when that long weary meal was at an end, for I was too sick at heart to taste aught.

As for Sylvia, she had pleaded a sudden headache as an excuse to my lady for not taking her place at the banquet, and Abigail had been cosseting her and brewing herb tea for her,—for the good old creature took mighty delight in all kinds of nursing.

We did presently turn this indisposition to good account, as I will relate in due time, for my thoughts had been mighty busy with some plan for young Coppinger's escape, and I did presently hit upon one, which took all our best wits to carry out.

It was needful for this that I should take old Abigail into my secret, but she was faithful and full of wit and courage, as had been oftentimes tried. As for my dear good brother he was so simply truthful, so guileless and honest, that to tell him a dangerous secret would be to put a burden on him heavier than he might bear.

So Abigail and I did quietly make all our preparations, and a few minutes before eight I was standing in the oak library, listening so eagerly for the coming of Ambrose that I could hear my heart throbbing.

I forgot to say that ere this I had bidden my Lady Coppinger good even, on the ground of Sylvia's continued headache, and our coach was ordered for half-past eight, to the no small contentment of John, who was in haste to get home to his books, for he loved not banquets and feasting.

The clock struck eight, and my impatience grew apace, when I did hear quick steps approaching and young Ambrose entered. It may seem strange to tell, but at that moment my courage did well-nigh fail me, and I scarce durst propose my plan to him; for what if he should refuse, and now too late to try any other mode!

'Here I am, you see, Mistress Millicent; and now I pray you put me out of suspense. But tell me first,' he added in an anxious tone, 'what aileth Mistress Sylvia that she came not to the dinner?'

As he asked this question a new idea came into my mind. I had been sorely puzzled by his strange coldness and seeming indifference towards Sylvia, when it was but for her sake he had angered his friends and left his home so long.

Who knows if all this were not due to false lies of that fellow Prior, who for his own purposes had wished to sow discord betwixt the two?

It seemed to me that it were the wisest plan to tell him the whole story from Ned Prior's first visit alone to the Rectory, which I did in as few words as possible. When I spoke of that letter of his, which never reached Sylvia, he did stamp and swear in most unseemly fashion, but I bid him hold his peace or I would tell him no more. So with suppressed wrath and muttered threats he heard me to the end.

'I could never have believed such knavery possible!' cried the poor fellow: 'why, till this hour I would have trusted Ned as my own soul! Yet truly, now I think on't, I should have doubted him when he swore that Sylvia was false to me!'

'But now, my lad,' I interrupted, 'there is not a moment to lose. You must simply do as I bid you. Our coach will be at the door in ten minutes; you are to disguise yourself as our good maid Abigail, and return thus with us to the Rectory, where even if they come to search for you I warrant they'll never find you.'

(To be continued.)

STORIES OF SIEGES.

QUERÉTARO.

(Continued from page 366.)

ONCE more a night was fixed for the final sally of the garrison; everything was ready; Mendez was in good humour again; the Emperor had paid his last visit to the hospitals (it grieved him especially to leave the wounded behind—but he arranged for their comfort as best he could); the last of the provisions was distributed among the half-starved troops. The Emperor's treasure was divided among five officers, who were to carry the coin in belts round their waists, and it was within a few hours of the time fixed for the start, when some officers came to the Emperor and asked for a delay of twenty-four hours. They had good reasons to give, and so the delay was granted.

This happened on the evening of the 14th May. As soon as it was known that the attempt would not be made that night, Colonel Lopez, the commandant of the Cruz, went round to his posts, and gave some strange orders. This Colonel Lopez was a man much relied on by the Emperor, and who had received many favours from him. Some days before this, when Lopez had come to the Emperor's rooms to speak to him, the Emperor's little King Charles' dog, 'Baby' (which had belonged to his wife, and was a great favourite of his), flew at the Colonel and attacked him with fury. This seemed very odd, as little 'Baby' was usually gentle with everybody. It is said that dogs know who is friendly with their master; perhaps 'Baby' had an instinct of that kind.

Well, as the twilight of that evening deepened into night, a man in plain clothes, whom nobody knew, might have been seen going the rounds with Lopez, visiting all the batteries and guards around the fort of Santa Cruz. Then Lopez told his soldiers that they would be relieved that night by a regiment which had been with Marquez, and had fought its way through the enemy.

The gunners in charge of one of the big guns were lying asleep, all but the sentry, at the foot of their pieces, when they were suddenly awakened by Colonel Lopez, who ordered the astonished corporal to turn the guns round with its mouth towards the convent, as there was a mutiny among the troops.

Some hours before dawn it might have been observed that all the guards generally stationed within and around the Cruz were withdrawn, even those who stood at the Emperor's door. The company which usually guarded the entrance of the convent

on the Plaza de la Cruz was gone. And so was the detachment of hussars who should have kept watch on the other side of the Plaza.

The great guns in the outer wall which bounded this square on one side were turned round with their mouths towards the convent, and the gloomy stone building with its courts and towers lay in the moonlight silent and deserted. Only one little group of men were to be seen; and those were standing near an open embrasure from which the guns had been removed, and which opened on to the Plaza.

Footsteps now approach from outside; men are scrambling up the steep slope under the embrasure. They are soldiers in the grey uniform of the President's Guards, and Colonel Lopez is with them.

A few moments after this—it was about five o'clock, and still dark—Prince Salm, who had laid down on his field-bed in his quarters at the Cruz without undressing, revolvers under his pillow, and sabre close at hand, was startled by the sudden entrance of Colonel Lopez.

He seemed much excited and called out, 'Quick! save the life of the Emperor! the enemy are already in the Cruz!' With that he disappeared.

Prince Salm rose and buckled on his sabre in haste; while he did so, the Emperor's steward came to summon him to his master.

He sent orders to the hussars who were quartered in the Plaza to mount at once and be ready in front of the Cruz, and went to the Emperor's apartments.

He found Maximilian dressed, and perfectly calm. 'We are betrayed, Salm,' he said; 'go and call out the hussars.'

Prince Salm hurried down to the Plaza, and soon, in the dim light of early dawn, perceived the state of things. The inner courts of the Cruz were by this time full of the enemy's soldiers. He returned to urge the Emperor's flight, and met him coming down the stairs. At the door which led out upon the Plaza they were stopped by soldiers of the enemy. Salm raised a pistol, but at a sign from the Emperor he dropped it again.

A few Republican officers now came up, and with them the traitor Lopez. It was a critical moment: the Emperor was evidently recognized, but one of the enemy's officers, fixing his eyes full on the little party, called out in a loud voice, 'Let those gentlemen pass,—they are citizens.' And so the Emperor with three officers, all in full uniform, passed out free.

Prince Salm looked surprised at this, and the Emperor noticed it, and said,—

'I know that officer who let us pass; he has a sister who was much with the Empress, and received many benefits from her. You see, Salm, it never does any harm to do a kindness.'

In the grey dawn they crossed the Plaza to where the cavalry (the Emperor's body-guard) were quartered. But they were not ready. The order given them the night before to remain saddled had been reversed by Lopez, as it was afterwards found. They had unsaddled their horses, and so were not yet ready to mount.

What was to be done? The Emperor sent orders to Miramon and Mejia to collect as many troops as they could on a little fortified mound at the other end of the town, called the Cerro de la Campaña, or

Bell Hill, and with a few more officers who had joined him he proceeded thither himself on foot through the silent streets.

A moment or two, and a horseman galloped after them, and overtook them. It was Lopez. The Emperor did not yet know of his treason—did not know that he had sold the Cruz to the enemy for 3000 ounces of gold, though his being seen among the enemy, at liberty and armed, looked suspicious. The Emperor asked him how things were going on, to which he answered, 'Your Majesty, everything is lost; the enemy is surrounding us.'

Perhaps, Judas-like, his conscience smote him, and he wished to prevent the extreme consequences of his crime—the Emperor's capture and death, for he implored the Emperor to enter a house which they were just passing, which belonged to a banker, where he might be concealed and safe.

He was answered quietly, but with a touch of haughtiness, 'I never hide myself.'

Scarcely was Lopez gone when one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp overtook him with his horse. But Maximilian would not mount: he remained on foot to share the fate of those few who were faithful to the last.

They reached the Cerro de la Campaña, while behind them the enemy was pouring into the town; the bells of the Cruz proclaimed that Querétaro was in their hands, and a running fire all along their lines outside replied triumphantly to the signal.

On the little Bell Hill a few Imperial troops were collected. Soon a hot fire was opened on them—they were surrounded on every side.

'Is it possible to break through?' questioned the Emperor, turning to Mejia.

'No; impossible now, Señor,' was the answer of the brave and faithful Indian; 'but if your Majesty orders it we will try. I, for my part, am ready to die.'

'O for a bullet!' longed Maximilian of Hapsburg, struggling against the humiliation of surrender to his unworthy and pitiless foes. But though bullets fell around, not one would come to set him free. He would not sacrifice his little band of defenders, so a white flag was hoisted, and an officer sent to the enemy's commander-in-chief, General Escobedo, to treat of surrender.

In answer to this, a Liberal General appeared on the Cerro, advanced to the Emperor respectfully and bareheaded, and declared him his prisoner. He was conducted at once to Escobedo, and surrounded by a crowd of the enemy's officers, some of whom insulted him; but one said on meeting him,—

'I greet you, not as Emperor, but as Archduke of Austria, and admire you for your heroic defence.'

Maximilian's first words to Escobedo were, 'If more blood must be shed, take only mine.'

Escobedo promised that he and his followers should be treated as prisoners of war.

The siege of Querétaro was over now; but the last scenes of the tragedy which has made the name of Querétaro for ever memorable yet remain to be told.

Maximilian was first taken back to his own quarters at Santa Cruz, which had meantime been plundered by the enemy. After two days he was removed to the Convent of Santa Teresita, in the



The Emperor requesting the Crown of Thorns to be placed in his cell.

centre of the town, from which the nuns had been driven out to make room for the prisoners. His fellow-captives here were Mejia, Salm, and a number of other officers. General Mendez had been discovered in a house where he was hiding, and was shot at once. The others were reserved for a mock trial. While they were here the wife of Prince Salm, an American lady, arrived in Querétaro. She had been for some time trying to get

into the town, but as long as the siege lasted it was impossible. Now she was allowed to visit the prisoners at the convent. The nuns, it was said, had kept it very clean; but it did not long remain so, for Princess Salm describes it as extremely dirty, overcrowded with prisoners, and very unhealthy: her husband, she said, looked as if he had just come out of a dust-bin; the Emperor was ill in bed in a miserable bare room.

On the 22nd of May, the Emperor, with the principal prisoners, was transferred to another convent—that of the Capuchin monks. Here they found General Miramon, who had been wounded in the last struggle on the 15th. Maximilian's enemies were cruel enough to force their distinguished prisoner to spend the first night in the grave-vault of this convent; 'to remind him,' they said, 'that his time was at hand.' Finally he was removed to a cell, which he occupied for the remainder of his imprisonment. This cell measured six paces by five; both door and window opened into a gallery with stone pillars and arches running round a square court in the interior of the convent. On the wall, over the prisoner's narrow bed, hung a crown of thorns, which had fallen from a crucifix that the rough soldiers had broken up for firewood. On entering the convent Maximilian had noticed it lying on the ground, and asked to have it in his cell, because, as he said, 'it suits well with my situation.'

Miramón, Mejía, and the other prisoners, had cells opening on the same gallery. At the door of each stood a sentry.

Such was the place where the Archduke Maximilian of Austria was to pass his last days, like a condemned felon. We know, from the records that have been left of those days, that his thoughts often turned to the past—to distant Vienna, where his mother still prayed for her son, and his beautiful home at Miramar, and his much-loved wife. We know that such thoughts did come to him; but we know, too, that strength to meet with calm composure every humiliation in store for him came to him also.

Prince Salm, hot-blooded and impetuous, chafed at times under his confinement and the indignities put upon him. 'Look at the lion in the cage!' said Maximilian, playfully, when he once saw him pacing his cell in a rage at some fresh insult. And when he felt thus impatient and angry he would visit the cell of the Emperor, 'to take a lesson,' he said, 'from the serene dignity with which he bore his cross.' The hearts even of his jailors, the rough Mexican officers, were won by the behaviour of their prisoner.

'Oh! I wish I had never become acquainted with Maximiliano!' said one of them, after sentence had been pronounced on him. 'I was his bitter enemy, but he has won me altogether by his serene, sublime demeanour, and his kindness. When I saw him just now my heart was breaking, and I am not ashamed to say that I turned aside and wept.'

Soon after he had been removed to the little cell, Princess Salm, who was at liberty and used to visit the prisoners as often as she could, heard that the trial was to begin at once, and that it and the execution would be over within three days. She determined to try to procure a respite for him. In the middle of the night she went to the convent, with an order to see the prisoners; her husband was awakened first: he seemed surprised to see her at that hour, but when she told him what she had heard and offered to go at once herself to the President Juárez, and try to prevail on him to put off the trial of the prisoners, he approved of her plan, and obtained leave to take her to the Emperor's cell. Maximilian wrote a note for her to take to Juárez, asking for a fortnight's time to prepare his defence, and she

started that same night for San Luis Potosí, the town where the President then was.

It took her five days to go there and back, although she travelled night and day, for the distance was long and the roads very bad. As soon as she returned she went at once to the Capuchin convent, just as she was—her boots cut to pieces, her dress and hair in disorder—she was so eager to tell her news. She found her husband with the Emperor; he had got permission to visit him sometimes, but a Mexican officer was always close by.

'Have you had any success?' asked her husband in a whisper, as he held her in his arms.

'They have granted the delay,' she answered; then turning to the Emperor, 'Oh, your Majesty, I am so glad!'

Maximilian kissed her hand and said, 'May God bless you, madame; you have been too kind to one who fears he can never serve you.'

'Do not be too sure of that, your Majesty,' she answered, trying to smile. 'I shall have some favour to ask for the Prince here, yet.'

'You will never need to ask that,' was the Emperor's reply.

Now that the respite was obtained the next thing to settle was how to make use of it. Prince Salm and his wife made plans to escape; but it was hard at first to get the Emperor to consent to anything of the kind. He thought it beneath him, and dishonourable, and it was only the consideration that the Republicans had broken their word to him, in trying him as a criminal after having promised to treat him as a prisoner of war, which brought him at last to yield to the Prince's entreaties. He would go, however, only on condition that Miramón and Mejía should share his flight, and that made it much more difficult to manage. But at last all was arranged; two Liberal colonels were won by bribes. They were to command the guard at the convent on the night of the 2nd June. Six horses, revolvers, and sabres, were purchased and concealed in the town; the plan was to escape to the port of Vera Cruz, which town still was faithful to the Emperor, and where several Austrian men-of-war were lying. The 2nd of June arrived and all promised well, when tidings were received by the Emperor that the Austrian ambassador and others, whom he had sent for from Mexico to receive his last messages to his family, and take charge of his will, would arrive at Querétaro the next day, and he put off his escape to another night.

(Concluded in our next.)

A CHEMICAL EXPERIMENT.

WHEN Isaac Hopper, a member of the Society of Friends, met a boy with a dirty face or hands, he would stop him and inquire if he ever studied chemistry. The boy, with a wondering stare, would answer, 'No.' 'Well, then, I will teach thee how to perform a curious chemical experiment,' said Friend Hopper. 'Go home, take a piece of soap, put it in water, and rub it briskly on thy hands and face. Thou hast no idea what a beautiful froth it will make, and how much whiter thy skin will be. That's a chemical experiment; I advise thee to try it.'

RESTLESS WALTER'S DREAM.



THE boy you see in the picture is Walter. He is not a bad boy, but he makes himself very unhappy by discontent; he has plenty to eat and drink, and a warm bed in that high-roofed house near the big old tree. He has a kind master and mistress, who consider him not a little. They are people of sense, who take wise care of him, and don't

allow him to neglect his duty, nor to roam in the street after nightfall. And when Walter was ill last spring, his own mother could not have nursed him more tenderly than his mistress, and yet he is not contented with his lot. He wishes to be at Upford Station, where he could see plenty of fresh faces every day, and watch the express thunder by, as if it would wreck the whole place, at half-past one to a minute; but if he were there, he would be soon tired of collecting tickets, and learning how to work that troublesome telegraph, and would sigh for a place under my Lord Blackwater's stud-groom. When there, he would soon hate the very smell of a stable, and wish he stood behind a counter at Trenton; but he does not know this; he says, 'Any-where but Elmhill Farm! I'm sick of feeding calves, sweeping up leaves, gathering eggs, and such slow work!'

Walter often looks at the blue hills which bound his native valley, and longs to see what is beyond them. He envies the swallows, because they come in the pleasant weather, and go when it gets cold and dull—most likely to some ever-bright and sunny land, where the sea is a rich deep blue, and the beach is dazzling white, and the hills are of fantastic shapes, and the grass vividly green, and the air sweet with rainbow-coloured flowers.

Now, one night, after giving way more than usual to these silly wishes, and going to bed very deep in the dumps, Walter had a strange vision, or dream.

The old house and the old tree, which figure in the picture, had long shared the same sunshine and the same storms.

When the old house began to rise from its foundations the tree was a stout sapling, which swayed to and fro in the breeze; and there, for two centuries and a half, they had neighboured together, silently doing their duty, and knowing no changes except those which were brought about by the times and seasons of God. The house could have told you many stories about Cromwell's iron-coated soldiers, who had entered into the kitchen without knocking at the door, and had climbed the stairs unbidden, and poked their swords under the beds after hiding Royalists. And the tree had its recollections, too, of those disastrous days; how a bullet had ploughed its way deep through the bark, and how boughs were cut off for rejoicing when the Second Charles got his own again.

'And here we are yet,' said the House to the as-

tonished dreamer; 'and the Stuarts are gone, and the Georges are gone, and Queen Victoria reigns.'

'Yes,' answered the Tree; 'and a good sovereign, too. But kings may come and queens may go, yet here I stand for ever, and contented I am. I shall never see more of the world than I have seen. When I am dead I shall be chopped down and riven asunder, and my heart will come out of your old chimney in smoke, and my ashes will be strewn on the onion-bed.'

'And I,' said the House, 'am getting very old and shaky, and may perhaps tumble about the folks' ears before they hew you down. And yet, though we are thus old and contented, here's little Walter tired of the place already! He says he wants change, and he has what he wants; he can go to church on Sunday and to the far field on Monday, and what more would he have?'

'Ay, what indeed?' said the Tree. 'My little twigs feel so indignant that they itch to give him a whipping, and that would be a change for him, and a proper one. Change! why, when is there anything but change? It is never the same for an hour together. There's morning, noon, twilight, midnight, sunshiny days, cloudy days, summer, winter, cold, and heat. I'm always changing, turning green or turning yellow; now the bees hum in my boughs, and now December's blast whistles by my frozen branches.'

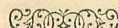
'Yes,' said the old House, 'and I've many changes to tell you that you know nothing of. Babes have been born and sick men breathed their last in me. The bonny bride has changed into the careworn widow, and the wailing infant has become a grandfather with a hoary head. Change! why, life is all change! The boy need not long to jump over the moon for change. He need not go and meet it, it will come to him fast enough; perhaps faster than he likes.'

'True, true,' said the Tree. 'He's the happiest lad in the wide world, if he only knew it: he's neither blind, deaf, nor lame; he is not half starved, like so many poor boys; he has no care, all he has to do is duty, sweet, happy duty: but men never know when they are well off, and, like the dog with the bit of meat in his mouth, they snap at the shadow of something better, and so lose all. What a lucky thing it is for us, old neighbour, that we cannot shift our places! Here we are; I am rooted, you have foundations. If we did what Walter wishes to do, I should wither, and you would be a ruinous heap.'

'Just let's try,' said the House.

No sooner said than done. The old couple set out on their travels, but they had not got far before the leaves of the tree turned horribly brown, and the old doors flapped, and the old glass shivered, and the old mossy slates came down in an exceedingly brisk shower, and one seemed to be coming so near Walter, that he started suddenly, and awoke. Whether the dream did him any good I am not able to say, but I can tell you I have cured the fidgets more than once by considering the contented disposition of an old dove-cot, which has no desire for change, although it bears the date of Preston Pans on its grey gable.

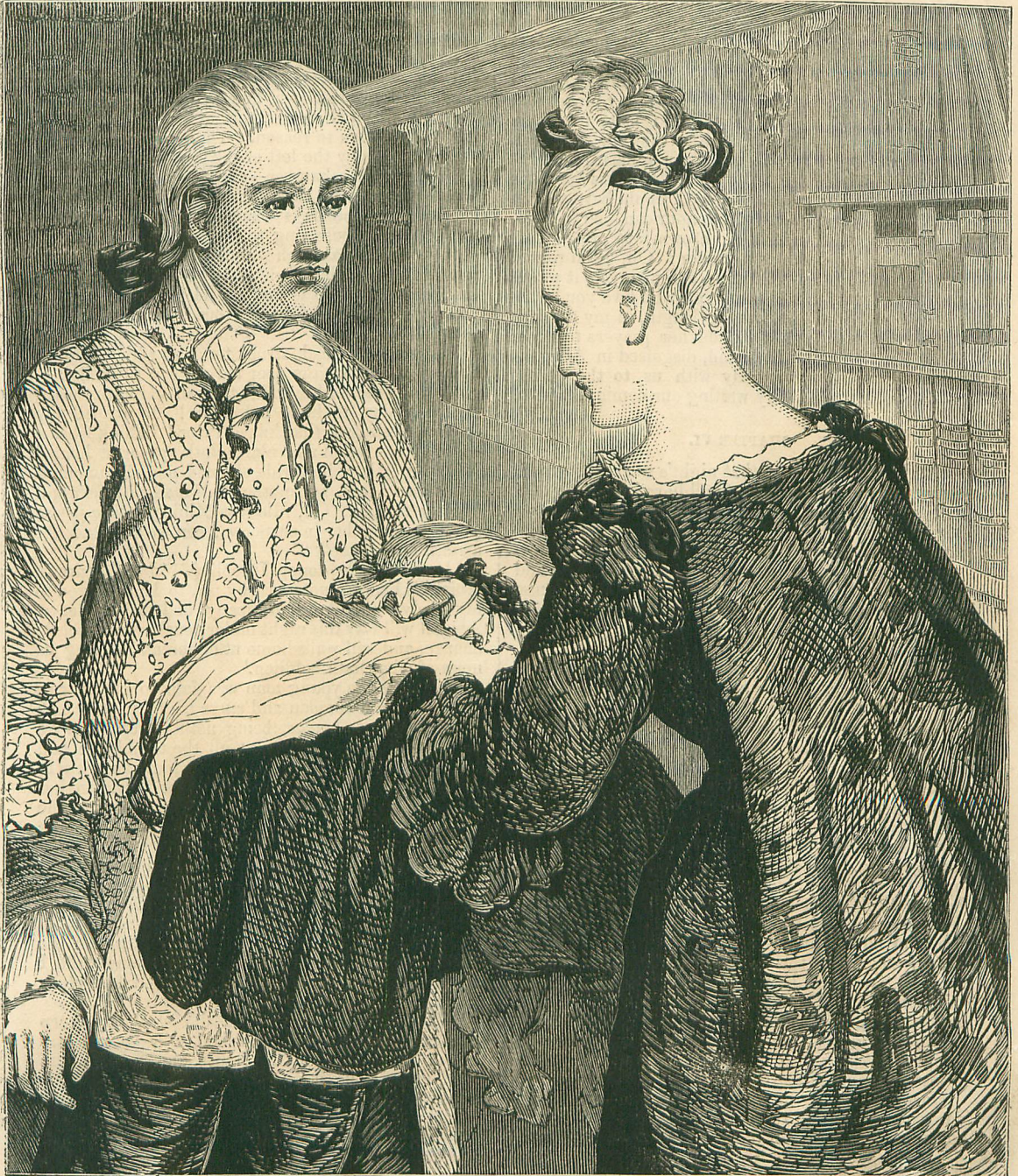
G. S. O.





Restless Walter.

Chatterbox.



"You do but jest, Madam," replied Ambrose.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 371.)

SEE, here is her stuff gown, and big white apron, and mob cap and ruffles; put them on quick, and none will suspect you as we pass out through the dim passages.

'You do but jest, madam,' replied Ambrose in a tone of defiance. 'I have done nought that would shame any brave man, and would you have me skulk away, like a thief in the dark, from my father's house?'

'Aye, dear lad! 'tis for your father's, for your mother's sake, I would have you do this thing. What gain, what honour can it be to them, to have you, their sole heir, thrown into prison, perchance put to death as a traitor? Oh, listen to me, Ambrose; were any harm to come to you it would bring such grief and shame to all who love you!'

So I implored him, and at length, in my despair, I did even fetch Sylvia to add her prayers to mine, till in the end he yielded, and, disguised in Abigail's clothes, hurried off quickly with us to the coach, where John was already waiting our coming.

CHAPTER VI.

As I do look back on that night's work, it seemeth strange to me that we should all have been such bold rebels against the king's majesty in thus achieving the escape of a suspected Jacobite. Truly my sudden plan did prosper beyond our hopes; none suspected that it was not the real Abigail who did depart with us in the coach, though I noted a strange man with a torch in his hand, who seemed to be narrowly keeping watch at the courtyard gate.

So we did reach the Rectory in silence and safety, mightily favoured by the darkness, the many times I trembled lest Ambrose should forget his part and betray himself by some ill-advised speech.

We alighted from the coach, and now my fear was lest that silly Phœbe, who had come to open the door with a lamp in her hand, should mark the strange gait and aspect and height of the false Abigail. It was a peril I had not thought of, but Sylvia did meet it with ready wit; by a clever jerk she overthrew the lamp, which fell broken on the ground, leaving us all in darkness and confusion. Whereupon I began to chide Phœbe for her clumsiness, bid her fetch another light, and then added loudly,—

'Come to my room without delay, Abigail; I am weary of all this merry-making, and will not be disturbed any more this night. Good-night to you, brother; Sylvia will be proud to see that you have all things needful. Come, Abigail!' and I led the way across the dimly-lighted hall and up the north staircase, followed by Ambrose, whose manly tread was so out of keeping with his disguise, that it kept me in instant fear of discovery.

Once safe in my chamber, his first act was to sit down on a chair and roar with laughter at the whole adventure. No fear of danger or sense of prudence

could repress the high spirits of the merry, light-hearted fellow.

'And now, Mistress Millicent,' he cried, as he tore off the mob cap and apron, 'tell me what comic disguise you would fain have me take to next. Can you trust me with your brocade and lace, or shall I borrow good Master Allyn's best suit of black, and velvet skull-cap?'

Such levity at an hour of so great peril would have angered me sorely, but that I never could resist his merry, roguish smile, from the days when as a little lad he would escape from the prim order of his home, and run riot over house and garden with us. Not till his mirth was somewhat exhausted could I get him to listen to reason. Then I drew back some sliding panels by the left of the fire-place—mine was an oak-panelled chamber—and showed him the great dark closet, which had been his favourite hiding-place in those by-gone days when he had been won't to make the old house ring with his boyish merriment.

'We will lay a couch yonder,' I said; 'and there must you sleep this night, Ambrose, while I sit up and keep watch. It is just possible that, after seeking you in vain at the Manor House, the soldiers may come on hither.'

Just then the clock struck ten, and with a sudden change of humour the poor lad did say gloomily:—

'What untoward fate that they should have chosen this very day to hunt me down! It was all my folly in trusting to that knave Prior! Think what a scene of confusion and alarm doth appear at home! My poor father, his pride shamed and dishonoured at his own board, my mother half mad with fear and anxiety for me. Oh, Mistress Millicent, sure it was cruel to leave her in suspense; can we not send her a word of my safety?'

'It is already done, I replied. 'I did leave in Abigail's hands a note writ by me, to be delivered to my lady when the company had taken leave. Abigail will stay this night under your mother's secret charge, and will walk home at daybreak to bring us news of what hath befallen.'

With this the young man was fain to be content, but still he did bemoan and curse his folly, the which I sought not to hinder, being nothing loth that he should feel some remorse at all the trouble he had brought on his friends. So I left him, doubtless to peaceful slumbers, and did seek out Sylvia in her chamber, where together we kept watch through the night, for she would not heed my entreaty and take the rest she so sorely needed.

It was scarce daybreak when we did hear at the north door, which opens to the garden, a few gentle taps. I felt sure that it was good Abigail returning, for so I had agreed with her to give me notice; but for the more assurance I did look out through the casement, and there, by the grey morning light, I saw her in mine own black silk hood and cloak which I had lent her.

Full of anxious curiosity I did stealthily creep down the staircase, which creaked sadly beneath my feet in the stillness of the house, and unbolted the door. Poor Abigail looked pale and weary, as well she might, for it was a good two miles she had come on foot; so I led her up into Sylvia's room, and did give her a glass of cordial with mine own hand

before I suffered her to tell her story. Thankful I was that the night's adventure had so far come to a good issue when she did give us her tidings.

It seemed that some of Sir Gilbert's guests, as was too oft the custom of fine gentlemen, had taken so much wine that they took no account of the lateness of the hour, and seemed like to stay the night at the Manor House. The banquet-hall had still some noisy inmates, and Sir Gilbert, who in courtesy could not leave them, was dozing in the arm-chair by the fire, when suddenly, without warning, the door opened, and there burst in a dozen Grenadier Guards, headed by their captain and lieutenant, and all armed with halberets and bayonets on their muskets.

'I'll warrant me,' continued Abigail, 'that it was enough to sober the company. Then the captain, having looked round the hall, went up to Sir Gilbert, who had stood up indignant, and showed him a big paper.

'What means this?' quoth he in a rage. 'The king's warrant to arrest my son on a charge of high treason!' And at this he swore at them all roundly.

'Where was my Lady Coppinger?' interrupted Sylvia. 'Had you got speech with her ere this?'

'Yes, mistress; as good luck would have it, I chanced to meet her alone in the corridor, and so told her all I knew, and gave her the letter! Ah, poor lady! it was a heavy blow to her, and at first she was like one distraught. But after a while she did gather her wits together, and we settled that she would do all in her power to hinder and keep the soldiers.'

Then Abigail went on to tell how the Manor House had been searched from garret to cellar, how every secret corner and hiding-place had been looked into; showing thus plainly, as I did suspect, that there were spies in the household itself. At last, to my no small contentment, I did hear that the captain and his grenadiers had gone off to London on a false scent, for one of the maids had been heard to whisper that there was a strange-looking serving-man went off in my Lady Ancester's chariot. Now it was well known that the family had strong liking for the Stuarts, so that the hint took the more readily.

Still, though the present danger did seem over, we knew that we were by no means safe; so in our little council of three women we did decide, that for a few days Ambrose must bide in close hiding at the Rectory. But as it did prove, this was no easy matter. He would forget all discretion, and tramp up and down the room, whistling lively tunes, and when I did exhort him to show more prudence he would exclaim,—

'How long will it please you to keep me mewed up here like a caged bird? I tell you truly, Mistress Millicent, that life is not worth the having at such a price.'

At the last, in sheer desperation, I was driven to let him join us for certain hours in the parlour, which had a door opening on the north staircase, so that in case of alarm he might retreat at once to his hiding-place. Here I did bring my embroidery-frame, and Sylvia would play the spinet, or sing, or talk, according to the young fellow's humour. Upon this he grew more contented, but it was mighty anxious work for me, and I would take my seat close by the door, so

as to give warning at the slightest sound of approaching footsteps. One day—it was nigh upon a week after the banquet, but to me it did seem like a month at the least—we were startled by the sound of wheels, and Abigail did come in a flurry, to announce that it was my Lady Coppinger's chariot. Now it troubled me mightily to think that she should have ventured to us, for it would be a sure way to raise suspicions if there were any on the watch. It was with some anxious feelings I did rise to welcome her, for I scarce knew how she had taken my bold action without waiting to consult her. But my doubts were soon set at rest, for she did greet me with warm affection, the tears in her eyes.

'How can we ever thank you enough, dear Mistress Millicent!' she cried. 'But for your ready wit our dear lad would have been now pining in a prison, and who knows — ? But I durst not think further. Sir Gilbert is full of your praises, and says you have too much sense for a woman.'

Thus she rattled on, doubtless as a veil to her emotion.

'But where have you hidden my boy?'

As she spoke, Ambrose rose with a smile from the low seat in the corner, where he was wont to be.

'Here I am, mother, kept a close captive, you see; and here are my gaolers,' he said, looking round at Sylvia.

After the first excitement of the meeting betwixt mother and son, she said; 'It is a sad business this, Ambrose, and like to be far more serious than you wot of. At the first your poor father was like one demented, and bid me never speak your name again. But I have so far won upon him, that if you will vow upon your solemn oath never to have word or commerce with the rebels again, but to live quietly a loyal and honest subject of King George, he will see you ere you depart, and give you his forgiveness.'

My lady paused, and looked earnestly at her son, but to my dismay he was silent and changed colour. As for Sylvia, who was sitting by my side, she did flush crimson, and her hands did tremble, so that she let fall her embroidery to the ground.

(To be continued.)

LAY OF THE BRAVE MAN.

ON mountain summits melts the snow;
A thousand torrents swell the fall;
A lake o'erwhelms the vale below;

A mighty stream receives them all:
High rolled the waves and onward bore
The floating blocks of ice before.

On arches strong, and massive piers,
A noble bridge above the flood,
Of well-squared stone its structure rears,
And in the midst the toll-house stood:
There dwelt the tollman with child and wife.
'Oh, tollman, tollman, arise for thy life!'

Hollow and loud the tempest rang,
Loud roared the winds and waves about;
Up to the roof the tollman sprang,
And looked upon the tumult out:
'I'm lost! I'm lost! no safety I see.
Oh! Heaven in its mercy have mercy on me!'

Clod after clod, the solid bank,
 Rolled in the waves from each torn shore;
 And down the stream on each wide flank,
 Pillar and arch together bore:
 The trembling tollman with wife and child,
 Called loudly above the tempest wild.

Stone after stone at each loose end,
 The foaming torrent tears away;
 Pier after pier begins to bend;
 Arch after arch to lose its stay:
 The ruin approaches the centre near:
 'O, merciful Heaven, in mercy give ear!'

High on the farther border stands
 A crowd of gazers large and small;
 And each one cries, or wrings his hands,
 But none durst venture of them all.
 The tollman still with wife and child
 Out shouted for safety the tempest wild.

Then galloped a Count amidst the band,—
 A noble Count on charger strong—
 What held the Count forth in his hand?
 It was a purse both full and long.
 'Two hundred pistoles shall be counted to-day
 To him who will bring them in safety away!'

'Tollman, bear up! thy heart be cheered!'
 High held the Count the golden prize:
 But each one heard and each one feared:
 Of thousands there, not one replies.
 In vain the tollman with wife and child
 Out shouted for safety the tempest wild!

See!—plain and honest on his way—
 A peasant man was passing by,
 In simple garb and kirtle grey,
 Of noble mien and cheerful eye:
 He heard the Count's prompt words so clear,
 And he saw the swift destruction near.

Then hastily in God's name he sprang
 Into a boat, and bravely steered,
 Through whirlpool, wave, and tempest's clang,
 Until the pier he safely neared:
 But the boat, alas! was far too small
 With safety to receive them all.

Thrice then his little bark he steered,
 Where whirlpool tossed and billows raved:
 And thrice the destined point he neared,
 Until at last he all had saved:
 But scarcely the last had stepped on shore,
 When the ruins sank, and the waves rolled o'er.

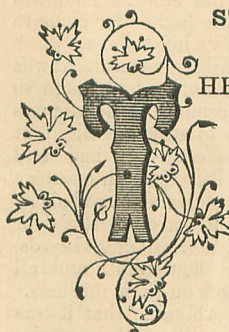
'Here,' cried the Count, 'my noble friend,
 Here in this purse the gold you'll find.'
 Well knew the Count his gold to spend!
 Doubtless the Count had a noble mind,—
 But nobler and loftier the bosom felt,
 That beat beneath the peasant's belt.

'My life shall not for wealth be sold;
 Poor though I am, I've enough to eat;
 So to the tollman give your gold,
 For he has lost both goods and meat;'
 With lofty tone he was heard to say,
 Then he turned on his heel, and went his way.

From the German of Burger.

STORIES OF SIEGES.

(Concluded from page 374.)



THREE days after, a Liberal General entered Prince Salm's cell, and roughly addressed him,—'You have attempted to effect the escape of Maximiliano. If you repeat it, you will be shot on the spot.'

The Prince did not deny this accusation; he perceived that the plot had been discovered, and merely answered,—'If I had done so,

would it have been more than my duty? You, I suppose, would have done the same if you had a feeling of love and honour for your chief. It is not the first time I have ventured my life for the Emperor, and I am ready to venture it again to save him.'

'We know that,' broke in the general; 'and you will now be removed to a place where that will be impossible.'

Prince Salm only asked to be allowed to take leave of the Emperor. 'When I saw him,' he said, 'I could not utter one single word. He gave me his hand, which I covered with kisses. I felt as if I should never look on his dear face again.'

He was taken away along with all the other prisoners, except the Emperor, Miramon, and Mejia, to another building, where they were guarded very strictly, and even knives and forks were taken away from them; so that fourteen generals and as many colonels might have been seen eating their meat with their fingers.

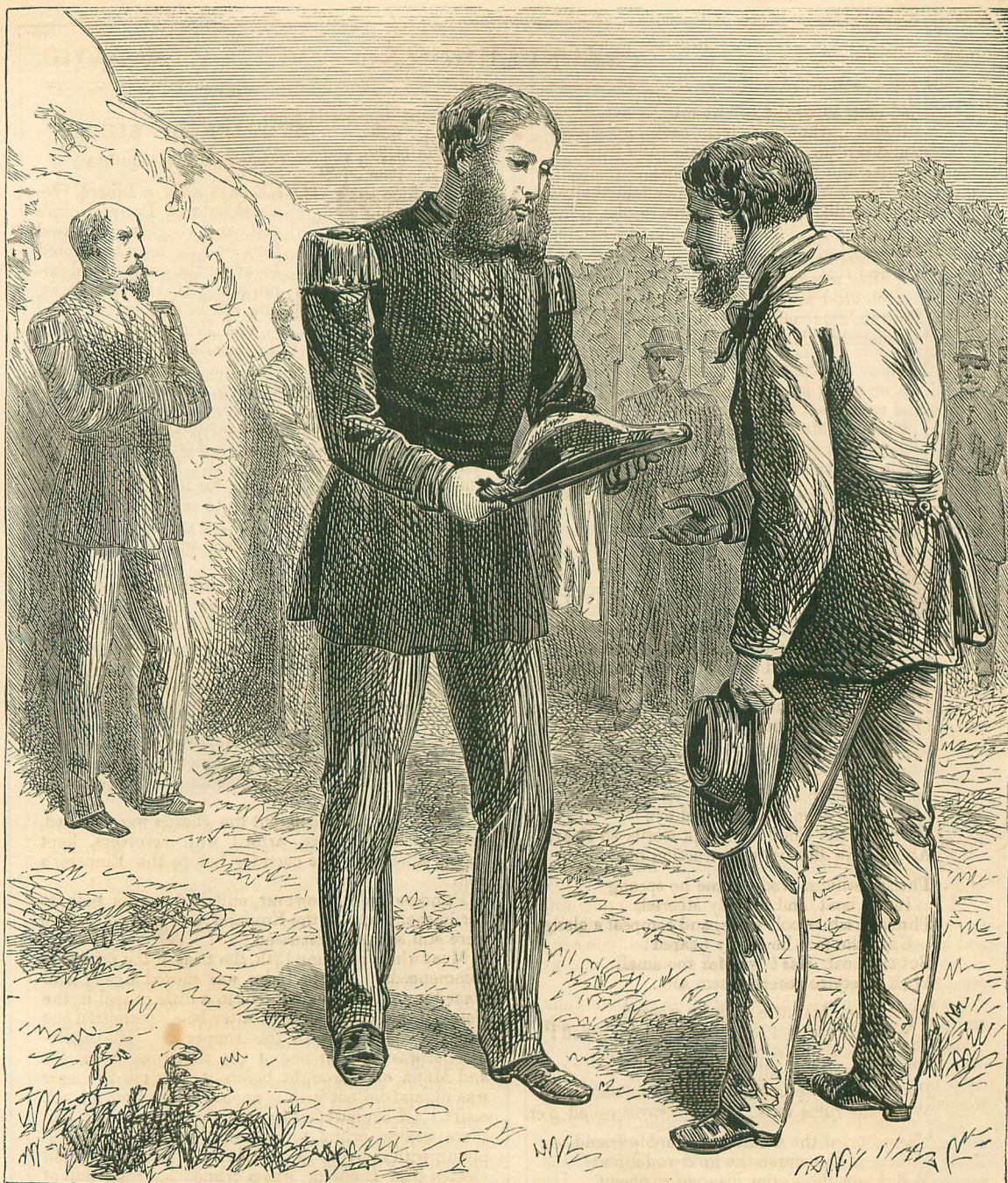
At the Capuchin convent the guards were trebled, and two field-officers, armed with revolvers, kept watch always in the corridor before the Emperor's cell.

Princess Salm, however, still had access both to her husband and to the Emperor, and plans of escape were still secretly discussed.

Meanwhile, on June 13th, the trial of the prisoners commenced. Prince Salm was moved again, and placed in solitary confinement in a little chapel in the Convent of Santa Teresita, after being permitted one parting interview with the Emperor. The court-martial was held in one of the theatres. Miramon and Mejia were brought before it; but the Emperor was ill, and did not wish to appear before such a mock court. Of course they had no right to try him, and there was no crime to try him for, unless his complying with the wish of the Mexican people, who had elected him Emperor, was a crime; but the result of the trial was well known beforehand.

During the trial Princess Salm was suddenly arrested, and sent off under escort to San Luis Potosi, without being allowed to see her husband; for a colonel, whom she had been trying to bribe, had gone to Escobedo and informed him that she was plotting Maximilian's escape.

On the morning of the 16th June the court-martial pronounced sentence of death on the Emperor and his two generals. The sentence was read to them in their prison at eleven o'clock, and they were



The Emperor giving his Handkerchief and Hat to his Hungarian Servant.

told that the execution would be at three on the same day.

The Emperor heard it with a calm smile; it was only what he had long expected. 'We have still nearly four hours,' he said to his German doctor, to whom he was dictating something; 'we can easily finish all.'

Soon afterwards a note was brought to him from Prince Salm, entreating permission to be with him to

the last. The Emperor sent him a kind message, thanking him for his faithful services, but saying that, much as he should like to have him with him, he was afraid that he might be carried away by his feelings and commit himself so that his life might be endangered, and so he denied himself the last pleasure of seeing his friend.

The fatal hour came and passed. The three condemned waited in the corridor—the Emperor calmly

conversing with his chaplain. At last, at four o'clock, came a telegram from San Luis Potosi, ordering the execution to be put off for three days.

Maximilian was grieved at the delay, for he had done with life; but he remained patient and resigned. On the 18th he telegraphed to Juarez a request 'that Miguel Miramon and Thomas Mejia, who suffered all the bitterness of death the day before last, might be spared, and that I, as I said when taken prisoner, might be the only victim.'

His request was refused, and in vain were also the entreaties of the Princess Salm, who on the same day, kneeling before President Juarez, implored with tears that the life of the prisoners might be spared. He promised her her husband's life, but she could obtain no further mercy.

Miramon and Mejia had a discussion between themselves that day, whether a piece of news which they had heard should be told to the Emperor. It was, that his wife, the Empress Charlotte was dead: it proved afterwards not to be true, but it was then believed to be certain. Mejia at last decided it would be better to tell him, and he did so himself on the evening of the 18th.

'One tie less binds me to life,' Maximilian said, after the silence which followed the first shock of the news. Thoughts of the wife whom he was leaving behind had given him more pain than anything else.

He slept calmly that night, but rose as early as half-past three; that his last hours might be given to prayer. For a time alone, and then with his chaplain, he thus strengthened himself for what was before him. Then he saw his German doctor, and gave him kind messages of farewell to all his friends.

The execution was to have been at eight, but it was hurried on, to avoid a riot among the townspeople, who were much excited; and at six, as he was breakfasting, an officer appeared to lead him away.

The Emperor understood what he had come for, and before he could speak, said,—

'I am ready,' and left his cell. His few remaining servants gathered round him in the corridor wept and kissed his hands. He said: 'Be calm, you see I am so: it is the will of God that I should die, and we must not rebel against that.'

Now Miramon and Mejia came from their cells, and the Emperor embraced his companions in death.

As they passed out into the open air on that bright June morning, Maximilian looked up and drew a deep breath. 'Ah, what a splendid day! I always wished to die on a day like this!' he said.

They drove to the place of execution, the Cerro de la Campaña, with a strong guard of soldiers. Early as it was the streets were crowded, and the women wept aloud as the Emperor passed. He responded to the greetings of the people with his heart-winning smile. Perhaps he thought of that day, only four months ago, when they had received him with such enthusiasm as he entered their city. How different was the procession now that passed through those same streets!

They arrived at the foot of the Bell Hill, and here, as they got out of the common cabs which had conveyed them, the chaplain who accompanied the Emperor was so much overcome, that instead of comforting he required support from the condemned. The Emperor

drew a smelling-bottle from his pocket and held it to him.

On the Hill a square of troops was drawn up, open at one side; and here a low wall had been erected, against which the prisoners were to stand. The wall was a little higher in the middle, because that was the place meant for the Emperor, as the tallest, but he said to Miramon, 'A brave soldier must be honoured by his sovereign even in his last hour; therefore permit me to give you the place of honour,' and signed to him to place himself in the middle. Then an officer and seven men stepped out in front of each of the three condemned.

The Emperor went up to those before him, and gave each a piece of gold, saying: 'Aim well, my lads; aim right here,' pointing to his heart. Then he gave his handkerchief and hat to his Hungarian servant, telling him to take them to his mother.

Next he spoke a few words in clear and firm voice, telling the Mexicans that he had come among them for the good of their country; that it was not ambition that had brought him here, and that he hoped his blood would be the last that would be shed for Mexico, and that it might bring peace to the unhappy country.

Taking his last look around in the glorious June sunshine, he noticed a group of citizens not far from him, men and women, who were sobbing aloud. He smiled kindly on them, then crossing his hands on his breast, he gave the signal to fire—with unbandaged eyes, and standing, all three received the fatal bullets.

'*Viva el Emperador!*' was the last cry of Miramon and Mejia. The words might have sounded like a mockery, as he of whom they spoke sank at that moment dead by their side, but we may seek in them a deeper meaning.

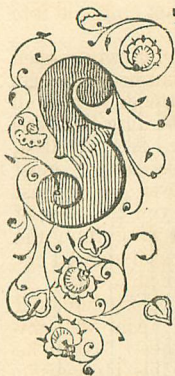
The name of Maximilian of Mexico will live to all ages, as that of a good and noble man. And we trust that a higher and truer life is his for ever.

His enemies, not satisfied with having killed him, heaped insults upon his body; but the people of Querétaro venerated him as a martyr, and many dipped their handkerchiefs in his blood. They had loved him with enthusiasm; and it was no wonder. 'The Mexicans,' says Prince Salm, 'are not used to a kind treatment from their generals, and here they saw a descendant of the Emperor of the conquerors of Mexico (Charles V.) walking daily among them, and showing sympathy and compassion for their sufferings, in striking contrast with the brutal behaviour of their own generals; a prince who shared all the dangers and privations of his soldiers, and who had a cheering, comforting word for every one. And he died with that serene calmness of soul which we admire so much in single instances in history, and the narrative of which touches the hearts of all succeeding generations.'

Perhaps you may like to hear what became of the writer of the above extract, from whose journal most of the particulars of the sad story of Querétaro have been taken. He was tried and condemned to death soon after the Emperor, but respited at the last moment, and after nearly a year's imprisonment he returned to Europe. He fell in August, 1870, in the battle of Mars-la-Tour, which cost Germany so many of her best and bravest. A. F. G.

THE STORY OF A SEAL.

(From the French.)



SOME years ago a German artist was travelling in Norway, on foot, with his knapsack on his back and his stick in his hand. He stopped wherever he pleased, sometimes to sketch a landscape at his leisure, sometimes to paint the strange costumes of the people of those almost unknown regions. He lodged, most of the time, in the cottages that he fell in with on his road; he laughed at the hardships that he had to bear; with the heedlessness of youth he scorned comforts, thinking himself fortunate when he could get a piece of salt fish or a slice of smoked reindeer flesh.

Well, he had found, not far from the North Cape, excellent quarters in a family consisting of a fisherman who had lost his wife. His mother of eighty took care of his four children, the eldest of whom was seven years old. There was in the house also a seal, which the fisherman had found on the sand just after harpooning the mother of the poor animal.

No sooner was it admitted into the cottage than the seal became the friend of the family and the playmate of the children. It played from morning till night with them, would lick their hands, and call them with a gentle little cry, which is not unlike the human voice, and it would look at them tenderly with its large blue eyes, shaded by long black lashes. It almost always followed its master to fish, swimming around the boat and taking a great many fish, which it delivered to the fisherman without even giving them a bite. A dog could not have been more devoted, faithful, teachable, or even more intelligent.

There is a superstition in Norway that evil genii enter into the bodies of seals, and that they carry misfortune to those who do not kill these animals. The fisherman's old mother, who was full of these ideas, did not cease, from morning till evening, to declare that the seal showed itself too cunning to be anything else than one of these genii. She predicted all sorts of misfortunes that the evil beast would draw on the family. It happened that one of the children fell ill. Dame Revsbotå repeated anew, so loud, and so often, that the seal was the cause of this illness, that the fisherman, weary of her clamour, one fine morning took the poor creature with him, rowed it out into the open sea, and there, more than four leagues from the shore, he threw it into the water and hurried home as fast as sails could carry him. Entering his cottage, the first thing that met his view was the seal lying close to the cradle of the sick child, and as soon as it saw its master it dragged itself towards him and overwhelmed him with its caresses.

'You see,' cried Dame Revsbotå, 'you see this evil spirit will not depart from our house. The child was better this morning, but since the horrid thing returned the fever has appeared in our little invalid more violently than before. Kill this unlucky seal or your son's fate will be decided.'

The fisherman drew his knife from his girdle; but his heart would not let him kill the creature that was showing him so much affection. The next day, after fortifying himself with a good allowance of corn-brandy, the fisherman again took the seal with him, hailed a steamer which was going to Hamburg, went on board, and sold the seal to a sailor. A fortnight afterwards, as he returned from his boat one evening, the fisherman saw the seal playing with his children in front of the cottage. Just at this time it happened that the German artist was lodging in the house of the Norwegian fisherman; moved by the fidelity of the seal he took it under his care, and protected it from the superstitious ideas of Dame Revsbotå, who at last ceased to complain about it.

But it happened that from this time misfortunes fell rapidly on the household; the grandmother broke one of her best wooden jars, an unknown distemper broke out among the reindeer, the nets of the fisherman were torn against the sharp edges of a rock, and a succession of storms, almost unknown during that season, prevented him for more than a week from putting to sea.

'The seal!' repeated the old woman; 'the seal! it is to it that we owe all this; while it remains in this cottage misfortunes will remain here also.'

Little by little the fisherman adopted his mother's superstition; so one day, soon after the tempests had ceased and fish had again become abundant, he drank a triple portion of corn-brandy, and, almost intoxicated, he called the seal as it swam and gambolled in the water, and made it go into the boat, there he put out its eyes and threw it into the water.

'I am at last rid of it!' he said. 'If I have not had the heart to kill it, at least in blinding it I have taken away every chance of its returning to the house.'

During the night the artist was awakened by strange moans. Some one knocked gently at the door, and seemed to be imploring help. The artist wished to get up and open the door, but the old woman opposed him desperately. 'It is the spirits of the night,' she cried; 'they will kill the children. I know what a similar act of foolish pity cost one of my neighbours; the Nikars struck her on the head, and from that time she lost her reason. For pity's sake don't open the door!'

The stranger yielded, but rather because the cries had ceased.

In the morning, when they opened the door, they found the seal lying cold and bloody before the doorstep. It had returned to die before the dwelling of the ungrateful master who had taken its life away.

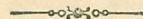
The fisherman silently lit his pipe and walked off with a surly air.

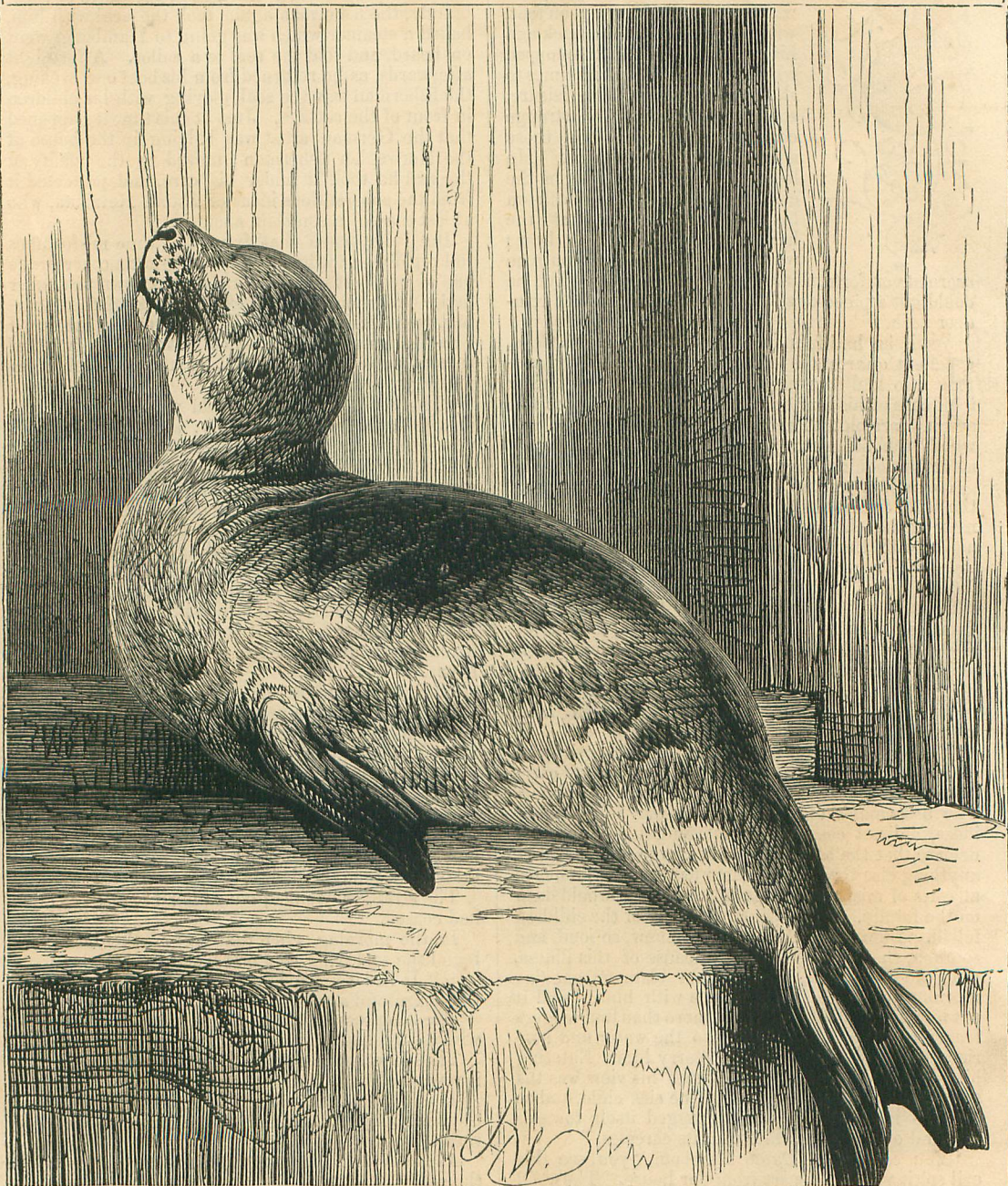
The old woman exclaimed, louder than ever, that it was witchcraft.

The children amused themselves by jumping over the dead body of the friend who had so often caressed them.

As to the artist, he set to work to make a study of the seal from nature, feeling very sorry for the cruel ignorance which had caused the death of the faithful creature.

ASTROLABE.





The Seal. By HARRISON WEIR.

Chatterbox.



"Here is for that poor creature you wot of."

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 379.)



AMBROSE, speak!' cried his mother, impatiently, with somewhat of her own proud temper. 'What meaneth this delay? It is but a little thing I ask, for sure you must have seen ere this the folly of your acts?'

It was an unlucky saying, for the taunt did but rouse her son's high spirit; when who knows if a gentle word might not have won him at that critical moment?

'Mother,' he replied, in a low, earnest tone, 'I would do much to please you and my father, but in a matter of right I must be guided by mine own conscience. I will make no rash vows.'

I could see the storm gathering as madam drew up her tall figure and a black cloud seemed to settle on her face, so I did with all haste try to make a diversion.

'We have been sorely troubled in mind, dear madam, to know what were best to be done, but now you will give us counsel. Each day that Ambrose bideeth here, I am in fear and trembling lest some want of discretion on our part should betray him, the rather that we be so nigh to London. Hitherto we have kept the knowledge of it from all our household, only old Abigail and Sylvia here being in the secret.'

'Aye, truly,' said my lady, more calmly, 'it is not just that you should bear this risk and anxiety longer. Moreover, there is no small danger, and I only marvel that ere this the king's grenadiers have not been guided hither by that false knave Prior. Ambrose,' she added, turning to him, 'your father thinks that your safest course were to escape with all speed to the north, and there keep in hiding for a time, while we use all efforts to win a pardon from the king by the good offices of Mister Walpole. I have already writ to your uncle, Macdonald of Berwick, to forewarn him that he is like to see you before many days. We have provided money and a fresh disguise; it is with me now in the coach, and I will deliver it to Mistress Millicent.'

Upon this her son bent forward and did kiss her hand.

'I will do your bidding without delay, mother,' he replied; 'and I do pray you to forgive me all the trouble and grief I have brought upon you. When would my father have me start?'

'Every moment's delay doth risk fresh danger. This very night Sir Gilbert will, with his own hands, saddle your horse Victory, and have him ready for you by the cow-sheds at the outer gate of the paddock, at nine of the clock, and bid you farewell. But for fear of rousing suspicion I dare not be there, so these must even be our last words.'

Her voice was broken with emotion, and rightly deeming that she would long to be alone with her son I did make a sign to Sylvia, and together we did gently steal out of the room. We found Abigail in the great hall, keeping guard like a dragon, lest Phœbe or the other maids should find some pretext

to hang about eavesdropping. When she came forth the poor lady's eyes were dim, but she put a strong control on her feelings, and did walk to the door with me, talking gaily. Then she took from the coach a great bundle, and did give it to me, saying,—

'Here is for that poor creature you wot of, and if more be wanted, let me know without fail.' And so drove off in her great chariot.

'Ah!' said I to Sylvia, when she was gone, 'you have longed to have such an equipage of your own, but think how often Care and Grief do ride in many a grand coach.'

'Yes, Aunt Millicent,' she did answer with her old sauciness; 'and many times they be met with walking on foot, too.'

It is always heavy work, leave-taking, and the more so when a friend doth go forth to strange parts, and to face unknown perils. Ambrose did his best to cheer us, for his spirits rose at the thought of travel and adventure.

'One thing you must favour me in, Mistress Millicent,' he said. 'I cannot leave this hospitable roof without a word of thanks and farewell to my dear old friend, Master Alleyn.'

I did make no answer at once, but as I thought on it, it seemed to me the lad was right. Tho' it was a deed of charity, yet it did grieve me sore that we had been forced to deceive my good brother, and now that our prisoner would be far hence in a few hours' time, there did seem to me no cause for concealment. So, without more ado, I did invade the peaceful study where John was deeply engaged in the writing of some learned pamphlet, with ponderous tomes on all sides of him. He did give but scant heed to me at first, thinking that it was but some petty domestick matter; but as I went on to tell my story he did make sundry ejaculations more of bewilderment than wrath. At the last I made a sign to Ambrose, who tarried by the door, and said,—

'Now the culprit must plead for himself, and make the best of his bad case;' and so I left them, in the hope that my brother's words of sober counsel would profit the headstrong youth.

Before the time of starting arrived we did all take our last meal together, and Ambrose did startle me by saying,—'Now, Mistress Millicent, you must not gainsay us; Sylvia and I have made a bargain together, and Master Alleyn doth approve of it. She will write me letters of all the pretty matters of home gossip, and I will send her tidings of my poor self as oft as occasion serves.'

'But we will have no more secrets, dear Aunt Millicent,' whispered Sylvia, as she took my hand.

So I was fain to give my consent, and thereupon, with many last words of blessing and farewell, my dear lad Ambrose did set forth on his perilous journey.

CHAPTER VII.

NEVER did the months seem to pass away as slowly as in that summer of 1715 A.D. We were for ever looking out for news, but the letters we did get from Ambrose were few and far between; and then so brief that they told scarce anything of his doings.

Meantime, stirring events were taking place in the kingdom; the harsh measures of the king did create

mighty ill-will, and many did join the side of the Pretender.

The chief seat of the rebellion was in Scotland, and in the month of September we did actually hear, on very good authority, that my Lord of Mar had proclaimed James Stuart as king, and set up his standard, and had assembled a body of ten thousand men, which was further increased by some English Jacobites.

One day about this time the post did bring a letter for Sylvia, the which she carried away into her own chamber to read. It was so long before she came forth that I did think it well to go and see what ailed her.

I gave a gentle tap at the closed door, but there was no answer; so I did enter, and found the poor girl on her knees by the bedside, her head buried in the pillows, and sobbing as though her heart would break. As she heard my footstep she started up, and I did see that she held the letter closely grasped in her hand.

'Tell me, dear Sylvia,' I said, anxiously, 'have you bad news of Ambrose?'

The young girl stood one moment irresolute, and then seizing my hand, she cried,—

'If I tell you, Aunt Millicent, will you keep his secret? Will you promise not to betray him?'

What could I do? I longed for tidings of my dear lad, and felt, moreover, that I was powerless to help or hinder him, so I did give the promise she asked for.

Then she let me see her letter, all blistered with tears. It ran thus:—

'Mine own sweet Sylvia,—I have writ this to you now, as I know not when I shall have occasion to write to you again. Will you blame me when you know that I have taken the final step, and joined the standard of King James? Or will my brave girl applaud the deed, and say it was well done to take arms in favour of our rightful Prince?'

'In any case the die is cast! My Lord of Derwentwater hath received me most kindly, and put me in command of a body of men. We are about to march southward, and ere long, I doubt not, you will hear that we have struck a decisive blow.

'Mine uncle Macdonald hath joined the good cause, and is here with me.

'I scarce dare think of my poor mother and Sir Gilbert, yet I do comfort me with the assurance that when King James hath his own, and the Elector is driven back to Hanover, they will have no lack of honour and court favour for my sake.

'Wishing you all health and prosperity, as also to my very good friends Mistress Millicent and Master Alleyn, I will subscribe myself,

'Your humble, devoted servant,

AMBROSE COPPINGER.

'Writ in the camp, nigh to Berwick, this twentieth day of September, 1715.'

It may well be conceived with what blank dismay I did read the lad's letter, so wild and rash, and yet almost touching in its honest simplicity.

Sylvia was watching me as I read it, with a trembling, wistful eagerness, as tho' in hopes that she might gather from me one ray of hope. But she saw nought in my face to comfort her.

'Is it too late, Aunt Millicent? Can nothing be done to turn him back—not if I could travel night and day, and plead with him to seek King George's pardon, ere he hath struck this blow he talks of? Speak to me! say it is possible!'

As she spoke, the poor girl stood before me with her hands clasped, and her pale face turned towards mine, as tho' from my lips she looked for the sentence of life or death.

'Alas, my child!' I replied, 'his own words do truly picture the truth—"the die is cast!" We can only wait, and pray for him. What, too, will Sir Gilbert and Lady Coppinger say, when they learn that the trusty friend, the uncle Macdonald, to whom they did send him, hath doubtless been one of the instruments to lead him to his ruin?'

'And I, too,' cried Sylvia, in bitter self-reproach, 'I did hear so much of the banished Prince James from Master Prior—and in my childish days, too, it was the fashion with my Lady Betty to praise the Stuarts, and long for them to have their own again—that I did take it to be a gallant thing in Ambrose to espouse their cause, and many times have I applauded his manly spirit.'

'Then did you know his purpose ere he set forth from us? I asked, with kindling anger against the foolish girl.

'Nay, Aunt Millicent, he had no plan. This only had he vowed—that he would never draw his sword against Prince James, his rightful king. But these last three months mine uncle Alleyn hath taught me much,' she added sadly. 'He ever speaketh of the great sin of rebellion, bringing bloodshed upon innocent folks, and says it is a hopeless cause, in the which all who join will lose their lives.'

Still I did feel some bitterness against Sylvia for her bygone folly, when I left her to see to my household matters, for we must needs dine and sup; and still the world goes on, whether we be in grief or joy.

(To be continued.)

TWO BRAVE CHILDREN,

ADOLPHE AND NORMAND DEGONY.

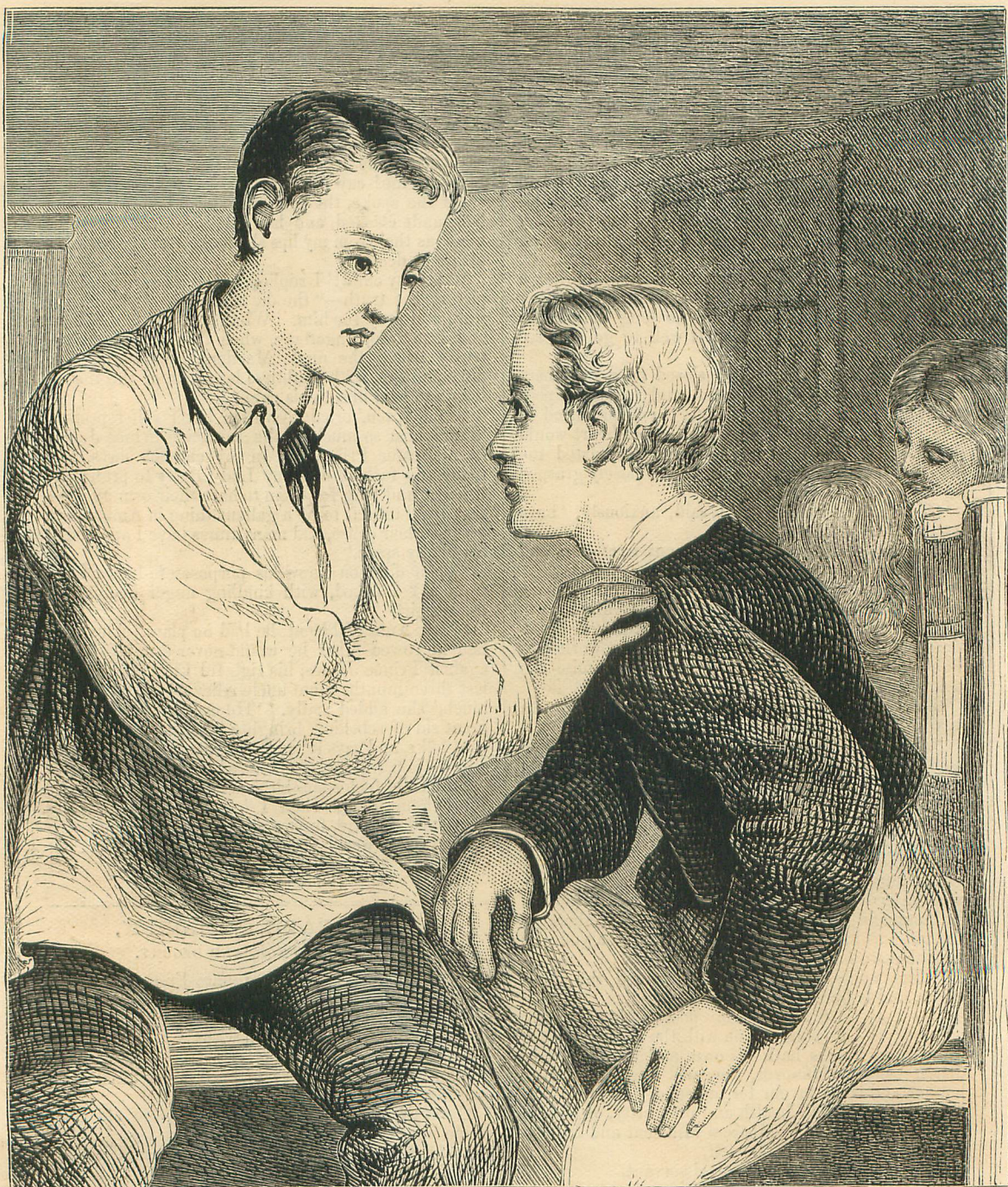
THE father of these unfortunate French children, after being married fifteen years, disappeared one morning, and like a coward abandoned his wife and five little ones, leaving them without any resources. The poor woman, encumbered with so heavy a burthen, displayed an energy in hard work which soon caused her death in last December.

Here, then, were five little orphans, the eldest of whom was fourteen and the youngest two. What can they do? Adolphe, the eldest, said to his brother,—

'Our mother has always told us that we must work in order to live. She made us both promise solemnly to take care of our little brothers, and never to beg. Let us go, then, and look out for some work.'

'Come along,' replied the other.

And both, serious as grown-up men, made old by trouble, started in search of employment. One entered Dupont's Printing-office, the other Cail's Factory. The second earned a franc and a half, the first one franc a-day; but it was not enough.



To add to it, these poor children worked overhours. Armand left the printing-press for the factory, not wishing to earn less than his brother. Both, depriving themselves of everything, brought back to their lodging the exact sum they had earned. They found means to pay the rent and to provide everything, arranging with a charitable neighbour, as poor as themselves, to prepare their meals. The Commissary of Police being informed of these facts, after a

time placed the two youngest children in a hospitable asylum ; but it was not without a struggle that the elder brothers consented to a separation.

We have since learned that a workman, very poor, but very kind, has taken charge of the three children Degony, treating them as if they were his own family. The Society for the Encouragement of Good, from whom we borrow these details, has bestowed on them a medal of honour. J. F. C.



LARRY LAZYBONES.

LARRY LAZYBONES!—as happy as the day is long!—at least, so he thought himself for half an hour every sunny day, as he lolled at his ease under the shadow of some old hulk, nestling in a sail-heap like a cat on a Turkey carpet, looking on with pity and contempt at the toilers around him on the beach of the sea-side village he belonged to, and thanking his stars that he had not to drudge like a slave, or even a sailor or fisherman.

Poor Larry! he had yet to learn that even plantation-slaves are sometimes happy, and are really a cheerful race, while many a well-born youth, who may lounge on a sofa or stroll at his pleasure half the day, becomes more and more the victim of dullness and discontent.

Larry's father, from whom the lad had received a thrashing now and again for his idleness, was dead, and after a while Larry rejoiced in the absence

of one on whom he looked chiefly as a taskmaster; while his mother, an industrious, uncomplaining woman, failed by her mild words in prevailing upon him to eke out the scanty provision left them, of which he certainly consumed the share of the lion's cub.

At one time the people about him used to say, 'Now, Larry, man, bear a hand,' at winding a windlass, or shoving a boat off, or carrying stores, or bringing fish ashore; but his usual reply with a shrug, a chuckle, and a sneer, was, 'that he didn't see the fun of it.' So they let him alone, and that pleased him best.

But harder taskmasters than his father now awaited him. Two grim guides nudged him by the shoulder, and hinted that he had better bestir himself a little: their names were Poverty and Necessity; for his mother's health declined, and their circumstances narrowed more and more. Larry's clothes got thinner and his food scarcer day by day.

So at last he cast about for some occupation. He went to a young fisherman, a little older than himself, who had at times showed himself friendly, and proposed to enter into partnership with him; but the friend became all at once very candid, and said that though he liked Larry's company over a pot of beer well enough, he was the last man in all the world he should think of taking for a partner.

There was a brisk, buxom, neat-handed lass of the village, who used to laugh sometimes with and sometimes at him, just as it happened. Larry thought that of late she had cast a pleasant eye upon him, and besides, he had a good opinion of his own personal appearance: most idlers have. So Larry summoned what pluck he had, and went and asked her to marry him. 'For,' thought Larry, 'her father is not badly off, I know, and she's industrious and comely; and as I must at last throw myself away on some girl or other, I may wait longer and fare worse.' But, to his surprise and chagrin, the damsel regarded him with an angry stare, and asked whether he had thrown away his senses with his last old shoes, and from that time dropped his acquaintance entirely.

Larry next applied to the skipper of a small coasting schooner, and offered himself as supercargo, or 'something in the genteel line,' as he said to himself. But the skipper jocularly showed him a rope's end, and said, that if he would go before the mast for three years and through the process of licking into shape, he would then give him the wages of a common seaman.

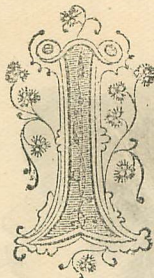
In short, poor Larry found himself the byword and scorn of the whole place. Now, urged by desperate want, he strives against the course of long habit. He not only has to work at times like a slave, but he feels like one; and as he labours drearily in bitterness of spirit, instead of looking forward with cheerfulness, he gazes back in thought at the days of his boyhood and youth, and still regrets the delusive charm of an easy and slothful life.

'Happy are they who bear the burden in their youth.'

F. B.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT COAL.

—o—



THINK we all love the sight of a blazing, glowing fire. It always looks so home-like, and seems to invite and welcome us. How cheerful and bright it makes the room, too! and how grateful are the light and warmth reflected by it! Let me talk to you a little, as we sit so cosily in the gloaming by the glowing hearth. What do you know about fire? Of

course you answer, It is made of coal, and coal is dug out of the earth. But what is coal? It is supposed that, a long time ago, there were vast forests of pine and other trees growing, which were by some means submerged (or covered with water); and that the action of water, combined with that of heat, after a very great many years, has converted this buried wood into the firm, dark coal we now use. As a strong proof of this I have heard of large floating beds of drift-wood, some six or eight miles in length, being found in the American rivers, and that the centre part of these deposits is often so firm, dark, and hard, as to be quite like coal. It is said, too, that if you were to cut very thin slices of coal, and examine them through a microscope, you would be able to trace in them the woody fibres and cells of trees.

You have heard of the peat-bogs in Ireland, and perhaps you know of what they are composed—of layers of decayed vegetable matter, mixed with earth, and sometimes with mineral substances, as are also the coal-beds. It has been thought that peat-bogs were at first formed by water settling in a certain place, and that the wood or other vegetable substances being thus submerged, gradually sank and settled, and became transformed into peat: something after the same manner, you see, as the ancient forests probably were, from which we think that coal was formed. And there is another link between coal and peat; in all peat-bogs whole trees are found. Very often these trees are of birch or oak: perhaps some of you have seen ornaments or walking-sticks made from the Irish bog-oak; it is very black, and hard, and heavy. Yes, you say, but it was not like the coal we burn. Not quite: it is wanting in one component part, that of bitumen, an inflammable property; so that it is more like anthracite, or non-bituminous coal, into which the peat would probably be transformed in time. Sometimes quaking bogs, or quagmires, have been drained, and the peat thus obtained is almost exactly like inferior coal. Paraffin has also been extracted from peat; and again, candles have been made from cannel (*i.e.* candle) coal. Then there is another kind of coal, which is chiefly used for ornaments: I mean jet. It is extremely light and brittle, and when it is cut and polished is valuable for making brooches, bracelets, and such ornaments. Anthracite, too, is carved into small articles, and so is bog-oak, though that never takes as brilliant a polish as the other two. There are also many different kinds and qualities of the

common burning coal, and these often take their names from the places where they are found, or perhaps the owner of the mine gives his name to the coal.

Vast coal-beds are found in various parts of the world; throughout the whole of the British Isles; in Spain, France, Germany; in Bohemia, Saxony, Russia; in Asia, too, and in North America, there are large fields of it. You know the uses of coal; it is most valuable for fuel, and our houses and public buildings are brilliantly lighted by the gas extracted from it. Then there is the tar, or what is left after the extraction of the gas, which was a few years back considered of very little use: and what shall you say when I tell you, that from this ugly, black, sticky, disagreeable-smelling gas-tar, are derived, by chemical processes, the most beautiful and dazzling colours? In the International Exhibition of 1862 there was placed a vessel of gas-tar; and round it were grouped fabrics dyed by colours extracted from tar. Superb silks, cashmeres, ostrich plumes, and many other materials, in every conceivable colour and shade; magnificent purples, gorgeous crimsons, lovely blues; and, contrasting with these, the softest, most exquisite shades of pink, green, or mauve. Side-by-side with these were shown the dyes themselves; some clear and translucent as crystal; others brilliant and sparkling.

Professor Faraday, in 1825, was the first who discovered the presence of the oily substance in gas-tar, called benzol, from which, by means of chemical action, the dyes are obtained; and since that time, step by step, new discoveries have been, and are still being made. But it was not until 1848 that Mr. Charles Mansfield found out that it could be obtained in any quantity; and it was he who introduced it as a new and useful article of commerce. M. W.

NEP'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.

NOW good dogs all, both great and small, attend to what I say:

My eyes, you know, are growing dim, my coat is growing grey;

And when our eyes are growing dim, as scarce you need be told,

And when our coat is growing grey, then we are growing old.

And when we're growing old we care no more to jump and run,

We like a quiet kennel best, or basking in the sun;

And while we in our kennel doze, or in the sunshine bask,

We often think upon our lives and take ourselves to task.

'Now was I not a foolish dog?' sometimes perhaps we say;

Or, 'Was I not a spiteful dog to snarl in that sad way?'

And then, perhaps, there comes a wish—but oh! the wish is vain—

'I'd be a better dog if I might just begin again.'

To-day, as I was lying thus upon the pleasant grass, I heard the little bounding feet of happy children pass;

And as they shouted in their play a laugh so gay and glad,

A memory came back to me which made my heart feel sad.

I had a little master once, a baby-boy was he, When I was but a friendless pup, and he was good to me:

I shared my little master's food, I shared my master's play,

And we were friends and playfellows the whole long happy day.

Along the pleasant fields and hills we roved about together,

Amongst the yellow buttercups or through the soft sweet heather;

Or I would shake my rough wet coat upon the smooth sea sands,

And make my little master laugh and clap his tiny hands.

He always said good-night to me before he went to bed,

And when the next day he awoke, 'Good morning, Nep,' he said:

I was so happy in those days, those pleasant days gone by,

And we were friends—such right good friends!—my master dear and I.

But oh! one day my master dear played with his little brother,

Thought I, 'I'm not his playmate now for he has found another;'

With that I gave a jealous snarl, an ugly snarl of spite,

And at the little baby-boys I flew with all my might.

Well, with that snarl my happy times came quickly to an end,

A spiteful, jealous dog, they said, could be no trusty friend:

And through my long long life I've wished—but but wished, alas! in vain—

That that bad deed could be undone, and old times come again.

For nevermore the fields and hills we roved about together,

Amongst the yellow buttercups and through the soft sweet heather;

And nevermore upon the shore we played beside the sea:

They parted us who were such friends, my master dear and me.

Now good dogs all, both great and small, attend to what I've told,

To grieve kind friends when you are young, will grieve you when you're old;

And most of all remember this—that wishing will be vain

To undo deeds that have been done, and bring days back again.

E. M. A. F. S.



'Good morning, Nep,' he said.

Chatterbox.



Mistress Alleyn's Interview with Sir Gilbert.

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Continued from page 387.)



TERRIBLE time it was for us all that followed. Day after day Sylvia did move about the house looking like a ghost, too dejected and languid to settle to anything. Her embroidery-frame stood neglected, or if she did put a stitch to it it was for the most part wrong, and I had to unpick it and set the work right.

I would urge her to sit down to her spinet, or sing sacred hymns, but this did but add to her melancholy, for the tears would come to her eyes in thinking of other days, when she did play and sing to one whom she might never see again.

My brother John, to whom we had told all, did take means to have the earliest news from London by a special messenger; but in this we found scant comfort, for it did keep us ever in a state of fresh excitement and alarm, so that we almost learnt to tremble at every arrival.

Rumours did come to us one day to be contradicted the next; but this much was certain, that my Lord Duke of Argyle had been made commander of the king's forces in Scotland, and a decisive battle was expected there as soon as he should come up with the rebels under the Earl of Mar.

Meantime there did come to us reports of the rising in the North of England, which concerned us more nearly, as, doubtless, Ambrose would still be with the army of my Lord of Derwentwater.

We heard of the insurgents at Newcastle, which they had besieged; but was defended with such valour by the inhabitants that they were driven back. Then each day news did come of some further advance—through Penrith, Appleby, Kendal, and on into Lancashire—till the land was full of fear and doubt as to how this might end.

We were told that at Lancaster, Colonel Chartres, who was in command of the men quartered there, did wish to blow up the bridge over the river; but the citizens not being willing, the rebels entered the place in triumph.

It seemed almost past credit when the rumours spread that the county militias, which were raised to oppose them, did flee in all directions at sight of the enemy.

We did wait for news of Ambrose, but yet trembled lest they should come.

It was like the lull before the storm, but the thunderbolt was about to fall.

One day—it was the 16th of November, I do mind me well—I had been summoned in haste to the village to see a dear little burnt child; and having used my poor skill to ease her sufferings, I had come home weary and sad at heart, when, at the door, who should meet me but John, looking scared and troubled beyond measure.

He took my hand without a word, and then

having closed the door carefully, and sat me down in his own great chair, he drew a long sigh, and cried,—

'Millicent, it is come at last. Have you courage to hear the worst?'

I found breath, after a moment, to answer,—

'Tell me quick! I hold not with breaking bad news gently. Is Ambrose dead?'

He shook his head, and replied,—

'Not so. Better for him had he fallen on the field of battle, if in God's mercy he was prepared for death, rather than to be taken prisoner and perish as a traitor on the scaffold. But I will not keep you in suspense. At Preston the rebels met the king's army under General Carpenter; they were outnumbered and surrounded. The choice was given them of laying down their arms or being cut to pieces. On this they surrendered, and report doth say there will be mercy shown to none.'

It was not oft that tears did overmaster me, but at this terrible news, which did seem to leave no room for hope, my strength broke down, and I wept like a young girl.

John took my hand tenderly, and said,—

'Weep if it doth ease your trouble, Millicent, but such tears are bitter to see. You will need all your courage anon. Think of Sylvia—of Sir Gilbert and my lady, who must hear the sad tidings, and can be told of it by no gentler tongue than yours. There is little time to lose; the next despatch may have the names of the chief prisoners, and it would be a cruel blow if the news came thus.'

By a strong effort I did check those hot, burning drops, which, unlike the tears of youth, bring no relief with them.

'I am ready,' quoth I; 'tell me what to do, my brother.'

'Timothy hath orders to have your horse ready at once, and you had best ride with him to the Manor before you have been unnerved by witnessing the poor girl's anguish.'

I had prepared to do as my brother had said, but it was not to be; for as I came out into the great hall, whom should I meet but Sylvia, pacing up and down in the greatest excitement!

At sight of me she hurried forwards, and I did see at once that by some kind of instinct she felt that trouble had come.

I would have hurried past her, that she might not mark the signs of tears on my face, but she would not let me go.

'Do not keep it from me, dear Aunt Millicent,' she pleaded. 'Tell me what has befallen. Indeed I will be strong and brave: I could bear anything better than this suspense.'

As I did look at her calm, pale face, I marvelled to think what a change had come over the impulsive girl, who had been so wilful in her stormy grief.

The story of David came to my mind; how he had sorrowed and mourned while the child yet lived, but when all hope was over had risen up strong to endure the worst.

So in few words I told her the fearful tale. She did not swoon, nor cry out, nor break into passionate weeping, but simply said,—

'He still lives! then there is hope! Aunt Milli-

cent, you must trust me. It was in part my fault that Ambrose did join the cause; I will to London, and go on my knees to the king, and pray him to let me die instead.'

There was such intense earnestness in the girl's tone that I felt no words of mine would stay her; and truly it did seem to me a last forlorn hope to seek a pardon from his majesty.

Then the thought came to me that Sir Gilbert, who was well known for a staunch Whig, had friends at Court; so we settled in haste that we would have the coach out, and Sylvia should go with me to the Manor, all prepared for a journey to London.

It was a solemn drive we had that day, for we were both as grave and silent as though we were attending a funeral.

As it befell my lady was from home, staying a few days with an old friend and gossip at Hillingdon, but Sir Gilbert, the man said, was in the library.

This, I foresaw, would make my task easier; so I bid the servant show us in without further ceremony, and announce Mistress Alleyne.

As we entered, the master of the house was sitting by the fire in his shooting-clothes, talking very loud and swearing boisterously at his groom, who had neglected some order.

At sight of us two ladies he did look mightily amazed, and not over-well pleased: but he roughly dismissed the man, and then, with some show of courtesy, he bid us be seated, and asked to what he was indebted for the favour of our visit.

So, with no more ado, I asked him if he had heard the last news from Preston.

'What! what! Yes,' said he, 'the despatch hath but just reached me. And serve those knavish rebels right, for it was a crying shame to the whole country that they should have been suffered to march so far. Lucky thing it was, eh! Mistress Millicent, that we sent that foolish boy of ours into safe quarters?' he added, in a tone of satisfaction.

Sylvia and I looked at each other. Now had come the dreaded moment.

He saw the glance, and seemed a little uneasy.

'What! what!' he exclaimed; 'he's not got into mischief again, has he? Ah! you women always get mixed up in a scrape if there is one, as I'm always telling madam.'

I had been thinking so much of how I should gently tell the bad tidings, but on the spur of the moment I could do nought better than bluntly answer,—

'Private intelligence hath reached us that Ambrose, and his uncle Macdonald too, had joined the rebel army, and must have been amongst those taken prisoners at Preston.'

At the first moment the poor father seemed stunned by the sudden blow: he buried his face in his hands, while we sat trembling at what would come next.

I had looked for a burst of rage and many oaths, but this silence did almost alarm me more. With a thoughtfulness for which I had scarce given him credit, his first care was for his wife.

'What will poor madam say? It will go nigh to be the death of her,' he cried. 'And to think that her own brother Macdonald should have led the lad

on to it! And it was her plan to send him there! What a fool I was to hearken to her! If we had but let matters take their course, a few weeks in prison would have brought the misguided fellow to his senses, and he'd have come out a loyal subject.'

These last words were like a stab to me; for I, too, had felt that maybe in our blindness we had paved the way for this trouble, by doing evil that good might come.

'May God forgive me!' I cried, scarce knowing that I spoke the words aloud.

'Nay, Mistress Millicent,' said Sir Gilbert, rising from his seat, and grasping mine hand with an energy that did make it ache; 'pardon my hasty words: you did act well and bravely that night, and I do thank you from my heart.'

All this time Sylvia had sat there pale and quiet, but emboldened by Sir Gilbert's change of manner she broke silence:—

'If it please you, sir, I would pray you to give me counsel how best to gain audience of his majesty. Maybe you know persons of quality who are in favour about the Court?'

'What! what! my good girl!' he cried in surprise. 'Why should you wish to see the king?'

Upon this, I did think it best to explain fully how matters stood between the young people, and how Sylvia had set her hopes upon a personal appeal to King George.

Sir Gilbert shook his head doubtfully; he had but little faith in the plan; and yet, as I did urge upon him, it was the last straw to which we could cling. He was mightily pleased with the girl's spirit, and, more from kindness than hope of success, he promised to arrange matters with my Lady Coppinger, if she would consent that she and Sylvia should set off on the morrow for London.

'And now we must send without delay to fetch madam home,' said he; 'and a sad welcome have we for her. Mistress Millicent, of your charity will you stay for her return? and then you may safely trust little Mistress Sylvia here in our charge.'

So I did readily promise, and even in the midst of our great sadness it was a comfort to me to mark with what liking and high favour the old squire did look upon my dear niece.

(Concluded in our next.)

THE YOUNG SCEPTIC.

A SCEPTICAL young Collegian confronted an old Quaker with the statement that he did not believe in the Bible.

The Quaker said to him, 'Does thee believe in France?'

'Yes; for though I have not seen it I have seen others who have: besides, there is plenty of proof that such a country does exist.'

'Then thee will not believe anything thee or others has not seen?'

'No, to be sure I won't.'

'Did thee ever see thy own brains?'

'No.'

'Ever see anybody that did?'

'No.'

'Does thee believe thee has any?'

PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE.

COMPOSED EXPRESSLY FOR 'CHATTERBOX.'

Maestoso.

Up, up, in truth and fer - vour, What - e'er our task may

be; We al - ways should en - dea - vour, To gain the vic - to -

- ry. No i - dle, vain im - pa - tience Should mar our en - ter -

- prise; Patience and per - se - ve - rance Make men both great and wise.

Pa - tience and per - se - ve - rance Make men both great and wise.

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UP! up! in truth and fervour;
 Whate'er our task may be,
 We always should endeavour
 To gain the victory.
 No idle, vain impatience,
 Should mar our enterprise;
 Patience and perseverance
 Make men both great and wise.
 Up! up! this is the watchword
 Of each aspiring heart:
 In duty ne'er be backward,
 But always take your part.

Patience and perseverance
 Should always lead us on;
 To these a strict adherence
 Will nothing leave undone.
 Up! up! let not a little
 Our courage overthrow;
 With heartships should we wrestle,
 The wiser men we grow.
 The more we keep before us
 The maxim of my lay,
 We'll find success attend us
 Throughout a live-long day.

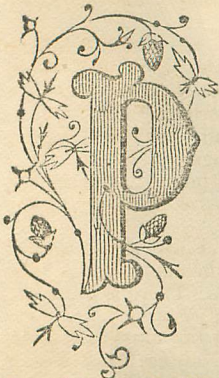


"Lina, you have allowed yourself to be cheated."

MASTER HOFFMANN'S BIRTHDAY; OR, THE EVILS OF A HASTY TEMPER.

From the German, by J. F. Cobb.

CHAPTER I.



PERHAPS in the whole city of Vienna there was not a more honest, clever, or contented man than the young master-shoemaker, Heinrich Hoffmann. Whoever wanted a pair of shoes or boots, which should not only fit like a glove but be of the very best materials too, applied to Master Hoffmann. And if he said, 'On such and such a day they shall be ready,' the customer could reckon that Hoffmann would

keep his word. When, in summer, the sun rose, he was already on his legs, singing out into the air at the open window, as blithe as a lark, some good hymn, such as 'My God! now morning dawns again,' or 'Now I am safely raised from sleep, and thank Thy goodness, O my God.' An hour after he awoke his young wife, and then the work went merrily on.

'He who has a good conscience and does his duty must let the world hear that he is happy,' the master often said to his wife; and then he would begin to sing 'Let us rejoice in life,' or 'What care I for money and wealth?' and similar pretty songs.

Often would the passers-by stand still when they heard the singing from the garret above, and say, 'Ah! indeed that is a song it is pleasant to hear, for it comes from the heart and soul as well as from a clear throat—in Master Hoffmann a good public singer is lost.' The master often heard this praise from many a mouth, but it did not make him proud, he was only pleased that people should like to hear him sing. And when work was over in the evening, and he had sung 'Welcome, O blessed eventide,' or 'Now all the woods are resting,' he and his Linchen ate their simple supper, and afterwards took a stroll through the town together. By ten o'clock both were in a sweet slumber, which was to strengthen them for the labours of the next day. To sit till far into the night in the public-house, which is the bad habit of many workmen, had no charm for Master Hoffmann.

He had been married nearly a year, when he said one evening to his wife, 'Linchen, in four weeks is my birthday; the first since we have been married; and we must make merry for once. On this day I have always had some good fortune, ever since I was a child. On my fourteenth birthday I found a ducat, on my eighteenth I was pronounced free from military service, on my twenty-third I fell down a steep flight of steps without breaking my neck, on my twenty-fourth I made your acquaintance at the gymnastic fête, on my twenty-ninth my old aunt Pepperkorn died and left me 500 thalers, with which I could set up an independent trade, on my thirtieth I became a burghess and a master-shoe-maker, and six weeks after your husband. Are not these birthdays such as few men can look back upon?'

'On your thirtieth birthday you very nearly lost your life in the water,' replied Linchen seriously; 'and that would have been a piece of bad luck indeed.'

'I might have profited by that affair, but I would not,' replied the master. 'Do you see, Linchen, if it had not been my birthday, perhaps I should not have had courage to jump into the water. Moreover, because I was keeping it as a holiday, I went out in the afternoon to take a little walk. On the lake two gentlemen were rowing in a boat, and moving about so awkwardly in it, that I felt certain it must end in an accident. I was right; for a minute after one of the gentlemen lost his balance, and fell into the water, where it is at least six yards deep. As a good swimmer I jumped in at once, and succeeded in bringing him alive to land. This is another instance of how I am always fortunate on my birthday.'

'And then you ran off in a great hurry, without answering the questions of the gentleman you had saved, as to your name and residence, and would not give any information when you were asked to do so by an advertisement in the newspaper, which offered you a reward,' continued Linchen.

'I had not the heart to do it,' replied Hoffmann. 'Heaven may reward such good deeds; by presents of money they are dishonoured. Look, Linchen, I think that what we do here on earth for God's sake we shall be rewarded for in the other world. If God should place me on His right hand at the last day, among His good angels, it would be much better for me than if I had taken a reward of a thousand thalers from the man I saved. But I believe, too, that such deeds bring a blessing here on earth; and when any special piece of good fortune happens to me, I think that is a reward for saving the man in the water.'

His wife had her own ideas on this subject of the reward, and began to give them. But Heinrich held his own, and they had almost a quarrel on the subject; but they soon made it up, and the master, sitting down on his stool, began to work and to sing, and both were as happy as they had been in their honeymoon.

So at last Master Hoffmann's birthday came. He greeted it with a more cheerful morning song than usual, and Linchen by presenting him with a large nosegay, an almond cake, and a waistcoat which she knitted herself. But in her heart Linchen was rejoicing at a secret surprise which she had prepared for her husband's dinner. Some time ago, while describing his wanderings as a journeyman apprentice through Hungary, he had told her that he had often eaten field-fare there, which birds are in that country a very cheap dish, and he said that when he crossed the market his mouth always watered when he saw them exposed for sale. But half-a-dozen of these birds, which would scarcely make a dish, cost a whole silver thaler at Vienna, so they were far too great a dainty for people of small means to indulge in. However, he should like to taste them again once in his life.

This wish had not fallen unnoticed into Linchen's ear. Every halfpenny she could spare she put aside, in order to save up money enough to buy a dozen field-fare, and with delight she counted up on the last market-day before Heinrich's birthday

two thalers—just sufficient to get the required quantity of the delicate dish. And, in fact, fourteen splendid birds were the result of her bargaining. How delighted she was when she came home, and with what solemn promises did she bind Baldrian the apprentice, who plucked the birds, that he was not to say a word to his master about it. Baldrian was determined to show himself worthy of the confidence placed in him, all the more as his mistress had given him as an encouragement a very large extra piece of sausage. He plucked the birds, ate the sausage, and was silent.

The soup was finished on the birthday dinner, and the master was busy on a piece of roast pork, which served as a mask for the chief dish, when he suddenly let his knife and fork sink down, and, raising his nose into the air, began to sniff. What was that delicious odour of roasting that came from the kitchen through the half-open door? Since his wandering through Hungary, never had he known such an appetising fragrance. It could be nothing else than roast field-fare!

Before he could ask a question, Linchen came into the room with the fourteen birds on a dish, Baldrian following her with the melted-butter sauce, which was to be eaten with them.

'Field-fare!' stammered out the master, amazed. 'Linchen, are you not out of your senses? Such an expensive dish! And just after pork, too!'

This unexpected reproach was like a shower of icy-cold water upon Linchen's heart. She had expected that Heinrich would have expressed his joyful thanks for this loving attention on her part, and now he was sitting there counting the cost of what he had never paid for, but which she herself had with difficulty saved out of her own money. What wife could have remained quiet under such ingratitude?

'I paid for these field-fare out of my own savings,' replied the young woman, her face glowing with vexation. 'I thought to give you a pleasure by doing so; but I now repent for being so silly. Had I only my two thalers back again!'

'Two thalers!' repeated the master: 'that is a lot of money, for which in these hard times you might have got something more sensible than such dainties. However, let it be; the thing cannot be altered now. If you had bought only half-a-dozen there would have been quite enough for us both.'

Baldrian had had some pork given to him. Baldrian, whose longing eyes rested in silent hope on the delicious-smelling, inviting birds, uttered at this announcement a suppressed sigh; not that he despised the pork; oh, no, indeed! but was he not in the same case as his mistress? Had he not plucked the birds, fetched everything for cooking them, and, as an honest lad, kept his promise of silence? and for all this ought he not to be rewarded with one field-fare at least?

Inwardly growling at the stinginess and ingratitude of his master, he handed his plate to the mistress for another piece of pork, and smiled fiercely as he received it at the very moment when Hoffmann was taking one of the despised birds and beginning to eat it. The cheerful birthday humour, had now changed into a gloomy silence. The master and mistress were cross with each other, and Baldrian, while he was

eating pork, was all the time tortured by a violent appetite for one of the field-fare, which, as he thought, he had so honestly earned. Master Hoffmann now spoke again, and very unpleasantly too—probably caused by his inward vexation.

'Lina, he began, as he held one of the field-fare on the top of his fork, in the full light of the sun, 'you have allowed yourself to be cheated; these are not field-fare at all; they are starlings.'

'No, Heinrich, they are really field-fare,' replied the mistress, with suppressed anger.

'Don't teach me what field-fare are!' said the master, sharply; 'you can't deprive me of my taste: I know that they are starlings.'

'And you can't deprive me of my sight,' replied Linchen, angrily. 'I bought them in the feathers, and know that they are field-fare. There is Baldrian, who plucked them; he is my witness.'

'Baldrian is a donkey!' cried the master, angrily. 'What does he know about field-fare? Let him stick to his shoemaking, and learn to do some decent work.'

'They are field-fare, master,' observed the apprentice, with confidence and indignation. 'They had claws, beaks, wings, and feathers. I plucked them myself; I must know.'

'Hold your tongue, you stupid boy! and eat your pork, or I——,' cried the master, with a threatening movement of his right hand.

'But Baldrian is right; they are not starlings,' cried his wife.

'But they *are* starlings, and, added to that, the very worst in the world! You have been taken in with this rubbish,' roared the master, as he struck upon the table, making all the plates and dishes jingle and dance.

Like a fury Linchen sprang up; this was too bad. 'Starlings! Taken in!' she screamed, no longer mistress of herself. 'Oh, you monster! you tyrant! Have I deserved this? Starlings! rubbish! Well, then, you need not eat the rubbish; and the best thing I can do will be to throw it out of the window.'

The deed followed the words instantly. Before Heinrich could hinder it, his wife had seized the dish with the birds in it, as well as the cup with the butter-sauce, and both flew out of the open window of the garret on the fourth story down into the crowded street below.

(To be continued.)

CAT AND SQUIRRELS.

A VERY fine cat was shown at the Crystal Palace Cat Show, with two squirrels in the same cage: the cat having lost its kittens brought up the squirrels, nursing and suckling them from quite tiny things. It was interesting to see the curious playful gambols that the adopted little ones indulged in with their evidently fond nurse; at times springing over her, then hiding beneath her warm fur, peeping out as saucily as may be, then with their forepaws about her neck caressing her, and being caressed in the gentlest manner possible. It was indeed a pretty sight; one to see and remember.

H. W.

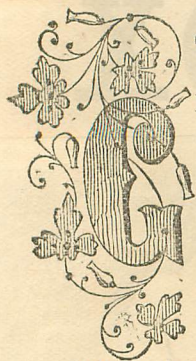


Cats and Squirrels.

Chatterbox.



Giotto sketching the Sheep and Lambs



GIOTTO THE YOUNG PAINTER.

GIOTTO was born in the year A.D. 1276 in a village near Florence. His parents were very poor, and lived in one of the smallest and most wretched huts of Vespignano, for that was the name of the village. Bondone, his father, was a shepherd, who watched his sheep on the hill-side in the frosts of winter and the sultry heat of summer, and no one would ever have supposed that a son of his would be heard of even as far off as the city of Florence.

And yet that little baby, who was wrapped up tightly in swaddling-clothes and put against the wall in his wooden cradle to be out of his mother's way, was one day to become so famous that his name would be known and honoured all over the world; yes, and will never be forgotten so long as history and art remain.

We can fancy how the little fellow grew up in that peaceful Italian village, with beautiful forms and colours always around him: the sunny fields, the lovely flowers, the majestic range of mountains, the Apennines, the clear deep blue of the sky, the picturesque dress of his neighbours, all must have combined to fill little Giotto's eye and mind with beauty.

But you may say that many other children have lived amongst beautiful things and yet have never become famous. True, indeed; it needs the seeing eye, the skilful hand, and the artist's spirit, to produce again the images of beauty in the midst of which so many people live with blind eyes and dead hearts.

Giotto was a true artist, one of Nature's princes, gifted with a rare and wonderful talent. From the time he was quite a little child he began to draw outlines of the forms around him, either with a stick on the sandy ground, or on the rude walls of his home with a piece of charcoal.

But his favourite subject above all others was his mother, whom he would sketch in every corner where he could find space; he was never weary of trying to draw the graceful outline of her head, covered with the square kerchief of the Italian peasant-woman, the folds of her draperies, and sometimes with his baby-brother on her knees.

No doubt many of his first attempts were rough and rude, for no art was ever learnt without much practice and study; but still the child worked on, untaught and unnoticed, for it was as natural to him to draw as to breathe.

His parents and his companions seem to have been as unconscious of his genius as he was himself, for it is doubtful if they knew anything of pictures beyond seeing, perhaps, some rude fresco above the altar in the village church.

So it happened that no one disturbed the peace of little Giotto, and he went on living his quiet happy life till he was old enough to go out with his father, and help him to mind the flocks. Day by day the little shepherd went out on the plain on the hill-side,

and all his idle time he still employed in his favourite amusement. He had no paper and pencils—nothing but a sharp bit of flint which he would pick up on the road, and his only sketch-board was a piece of slate.

It was natural that with his taste for drawing animals he should make endless studies of the sheep and lambs in all their forms and movements.

Giotto must have been still quite a young child when one day he was in charge of his sheep on the rocky side of a hill, at some little distance from the village. It was an intensely hot day, and his flock had crowded together for shelter close under the shadow of the rock, while he himself was so busy with a sketch of a group at a little distance from him that he did not notice the approach of a stranger.

It was a traveller from Florence who had mistaken his road to Vespignano, and seeing this little shepherd boy minding his flock had come to ask him the way.

'What are you doing there, my lad?' asked the stranger, after the boy had pointed out to him the path which led to the village.

At this question Giotto tried to hide the piece of slate which he held in his hand.

But the traveller, by his gentle voice and manner, soon persuaded the young artist to show him his work. It was an outline sketch of three sheep, so truthful and spirited that his new friend looked at it in silent wonder.

Giotto mistook the silence for disapproval, and would have hastily hidden his work, but the traveller, who was no other than Cimabue, the most famous painter of his time, grasped his hand and exclaimed,—

'Who has been teaching you, my child? Where did you learn to draw like this?'

'No one showed me,' replied the boy, with a smile. 'It is not well done, but the slate is so rough.'

'Not well done!' exclaimed Cimabue; 'I tell you I have not a pupil who could do so well after many years' study. What is your name, little shepherd? and where do you live?'

'My name is Giotto, and I live down yonder at Vespignano, the village you asked for, with my father and mother.'

'Well, then, Giotto, listen to me: you must come with me and be an artist. I will teach you all I know.'

As the child looked at him in wondering surprise Cimabue continued,—

'Do you know who I am? Have you ever heard of Cimabue of Florence, the painter?'

Giotto shook his head and replied,—

'No, I have never heard of him.'

So the fame of the great painter, whom all men delighted to honour, had not reached these few miles amongst the peasants of Vespignano. The artist smiled: 'This, then, was fame!' thought he.

'But, Giotto,' he continued, 'now that you know I am a painter, will you not come and live with me, and spend all your time in making pictures?'

'I cannot leave my sheep; what would become of them?' said the boy, but his face had flushed with delight at the very thought of such a life.

'Some other shepherd will mind them, my lad; for I know you long to come with me,' said Cimabue.

'But I cannot leave my father and mother,' cried the boy, while his eyes filled with tears at the feeling

that he must refuse to enter the Paradise which was offered to him.

'Who is your father? Come quickly; you must take me to him, and we will see if we cannot persuade him to let you be a painter.'

Giotto needed no second bidding. He gladly collected his flock together and led them home, while his new friend walked by his side, and asked him questions which drew from him all the simple story of his life.

When they reached the village, and came to the poor little hut which was Giotto's home, Bondone, his father, came out hastily, half alarmed to see his boy returning with a stranger dressed like a noble of Florence. He made a low salutation, but Cimabue, taking his hand, exclaimed,—

'I am come to ask a favour of you, my friend. To the lucky chance of losing my way to-day I owe it that I met your son here. He has wonderful talent; will you let him come with me to Florence and learn to be a painter?'

Bondone was so taken by surprise at these words that he could scarcely answer at first, but as the artist went on to explain to him who he was, and what he would do for Giotto, the poor man began to understand the wonderful new life which would open out before his son, and he very soon gave his consent.

When he heard from his father's lips that it was all true, that he might indeed learn all that he so longed to know, the boy's joy knew no bounds.

It was only the sight of his mother's tears at parting with him which sobered his excitement. But he threw his arms round her neck, and whispered,—

'Good-bye, dearest mother; I will come back soon, and you shall be proud of your Giotto some day.'

He was soon ready to start, for the possessions of an Italian peasant-boy did not take long to put together. A tiny wallet and his mother's blessing and prayers were all that he took with him from his native village as he left it with Cimabue.

A new world was before him. Imagine what the little shepherd must have felt on seeing the city of Florence for the first time, with all its grandeur and all its wonders! Can you fancy, too, the intense delight of the self-taught artist in looking upon paintings and works of art, and in receiving the generous lessons of his master?

There is a story told of him, that one day when Cimabue returned to his studio he found the young Giotto before a picture, weeping and trembling with excitement, and so engrossed that he did not notice his master's entrance.

'What is your trouble, Giotto? Why these tears?' asked his master, kindly.

'Alas, my master!' he cried, 'it is the grief I feel in thinking how long it will be before I can paint a master-piece like this!'

Cimabue tried to comfort and encourage him, and the young pupil devoted himself to his work with his whole heart.

Indeed he profited so well by the lessons of the great painter of Florence, that before long he not only equalled, but surpassed him.

I must tell you that all the paintings both of Giotto and Cimabue were in what is called distemper, a sort of water-colour, for oil-painting was not then known.

Some of Giotto's paintings are still preserved; there are a few in our National Gallery, and his talent seems the more wonderful when we remember that he lived nearly six hundred years ago.

Giotto was a sculptor and an architect as well as a painter. Amongst other works he built a campanile, or tower, at Santa Maria-del-Fiore, which was three hundred feet high, and was so graceful and perfect that the Emperor Charles V. said of it that it should be put away in a case, for it was too beautiful for people to see every day.

But it is chiefly as an artist that Giotto is known and remembered, and as he spent his life in constant work, he left pictures behind him in every city he visited. He was a friend of Dante, the great poet of Italy, and painted a portrait of him, which is still preserved.

His works are mostly on religious subjects, and he spent much of his time travelling from one church to another, painting frescoes and altar-pieces. But Florence was his home, and there it was that, in A.D. 1336, he died at the age of sixty, honoured and beloved by all men.

I have not told you much about the latter part of Giotto's life and his many great works, as this story is written to recall that most interesting time of his life when, as a little shepherd-boy on the hills near Florence, he first learnt to be an artist. M. A.

THE INDIAN'S NOBLE REVENGE.

O'er Ohio the day had passed,
And Autumn's yellow shade
Had wrapt the mountains and the hills,
And lengthened o'er the glade.
The honey-bee had sought her hive,
The bird her sheltered nest,
And in the wide-spread valley's gloom
Both wind and wave had rest.

Into a hunter's hut that eve
There came an Indian chief;
O'er all his frame was weariness,
And on his face was grief.
Moccasins, dress, and dancing plume,
Were weather-soiled and rent;
Broken were both his bow and spear,
And all his arrows spent.

Faint and imploring was his speech;
He knew the white man's hand
Was turned against the Indian tribes,
Still wasting from the land.
In vain he asked for a simple draught
Of water from the well,
And for a morsel of the food
That from his table fell.

When many years had flown away,
That hunter of the hill
Went further in the wilderness,
The deer and fowl to kill.
But soon his hounds lay spent with toil,
The deer were shy and fleet,
Fowls and Opossums kept aloof
When they heard the hunter's feet.

No food was in that desert place,
Nor crystal rivulet
To slake the torment of his thirst,
Or his hot brow to wet.
But lo! while life's dim taper still
Burned feebly in his breast,
A ministering angel came—
His ill-used Indian guest!

Who shared his forest-food with him,
His cup of water shared,
Then led the sick man unto those
For whom his heart most cared.
'I cursed thee not,' the Indian said,
'When thou wast stern to me,
And I have had my vengeance now;
White man! farewell to thee!'

Adapted from McLELLAN.

MASTER HOFFMANN'S BIRTHDAY.

(Continued from page 399.)



MEINRICH sat as if thunderstruck by this energetic deed of his usually quiet and good-tempered wife. Baldrian quietly crammed the remains of his pork into his capacious mouth, and darted like an arrow out of the door and down the stairs.

'Oh! What have I done?' cried Linchen, in deep penitence, drying the tears which rolled down her face. 'The beautiful birds, the

delicious sauce, my two thalers, all gone now! Oh, what an unhappy woman I am, to have such a hard-hearted husband, who can thus ill-treat me on his birthday! Alas! alas!'

The heart of the good master was touched at this not undeserved reproach, and he determined to atone immediately for his harsh and unjust conduct.

'Forgive me, Linchen,' he said. 'I allowed myself to be overcome by temper because you contradicted me; and you know I cannot bear that, and especially when it has to do with spending too much money. Will you make it up again?'

Linchen gave no answer; but smiling like a sunbeam through thunder-clouds, she gave her hand to her now humble and contrite husband.

'The field-fare, alas! is indeed gone,' sighed the master. 'Oh, what a stupid I am! I should like to box my own ears for my hotheadedness!'

A noise on the stairs of several voices talking together, and heavy footsteps, interrupted the further explanations of the couple.

'What is all that noise outside?' asked the master, not without his forebodings.

'Dreadful! Unheard of, indeed! Such insolence is monstrous!' were the words he heard now coming nearer. 'A shoemaker throwing roasted field-fare into the street! People say that workpeople now are getting bad wages! Could not these persons have given these birds to poor folk or starving children? And see how the lady, the registrar's wife, looks! These wasteful spendthrifts who throw roasted field-

fare out of the window will be well fined. Bonnet, dress, and jacket all spoiled; and now, when butter is so dreadfully dear, a whole sauce-dish full of melted butter thrown into the street! Why, the lord-mayor himself would not do such a thing! And this man will have to pay a penalty, too, who so shamefully throws God's gifts like mud into the street. He ought to be imprisoned and kept on bread and water for four weeks, that he may learn to value the good things which serve mankind for food.'

Filled with trouble and anxiety, the master had risen from his chair to see what the noise was outside, while Linchen, conscious of the mischief she had done, fled into the adjoining bedroom.

At the door of the room the master met some half-dozen women, followed by children and a policeman, among whom he saw his amiable apprentice Baldrian, who was blissfully devouring a field-fare.

'Are you the master-shoemaker Hoffmann?' asked the guardian of public security.

'I am,' replied the master in a low tone.

'Your apprentice,' continued the policeman, pointing to Baldrian, who was just beginning to eat a second field-fare, which he drew from his trowsers pocket, 'has named you as the individual guilty of a punishable offence, for which you will have to answer to the police. You have thrown earthenware, together with roast birds and butter-sauce, into the street. For this you are liable to a fine. How you will compensate this lady, the wife of the Registrar Schachtelmeyer, for her spoiled clothes, I do not know; you must settle the matter between you.'

With these words the policeman led forward a short, fat woman, with a market-basket on her arm, whose clothes were dripping with melted butter.

'You might have killed me!' screamed the fat woman, in a shrill voice; 'the whole dish fell right upon my head, so that I thought I must die of fright, if of nothing else. But there can be neither law nor justice in the land if I am to get no compensation. If I don't, I am determined to go to the Emperor himself.'

'And you rascal, it is you who have betrayed me!' said Master Hoffmann to his apprentice; 'and now you are eating my field-fare, too!'

'Did I not know well enough,' replied Baldrian, continuing to eat, 'that old Lauzenhauer had seen everything come out of the window? and when I hastened into the street to pick up these birds if possible and save them, I was held fast by all these people, and forced to confess. I am only too glad that I saved most of the field-fare.'

'Hold your tongue, you rascal, and be off!' cried the master, angrily. And then, turning to Frau Schachtelmeyer, he invited her to enter his lodging to arrange the matter in a friendly manner.

The policeman and his followers now went away, but not without several ill-natured remarks. Baldrian was the only one who was satisfied. When he found himself alone, he continued his meal by drawing another field-fare out of his pocket, and holding it up aloft before him he cried in delight, 'Revenge is sweet!'

Master Hoffmann had passed a very expensive birthday. He had to pay a fine of five thalers, as well as twelve thalers to Frau Schachtelmeyer for



The Master dealt Baldrian a box on the ear.

the damage done to her dress. Linchen nearly cried her eyes out; but that did not make the matter any better, and it was a long time before Heinrich ceased grumbling about it. He could not get over the loss

of his seventeen thalers. It seemed as if this unfortunate birthday feast was the beginning of troubles which disturbed the hitherto happy and peaceful life of Master Hoffmann. Linchen indeed soon

after presented him with a little heir, but had to endure a long and expensive illness. The master fell ill too, and could no longer serve his customers with his usual punctuality, so that he lost a good deal of money, and had to fall back upon his savings. But, trusting in God, he did not lose courage.

After she had recovered from her illness, his Linchen bloomed again like a rose; the baby, with its fat cheeks, was like a little cherub; and Heinrich too, in a few months, was restored to his full health, and worked and sang away again, so that it was a pleasure to listen to him. But he was poorer, indeed, than just after he had received his aunt Pepperkorn's legacy. He had now to use double diligence to make up for what he had lost. It was not too late yet.

CHAPTER II.

AGAIN the master's birthday was approaching. All were well and happy, and there was again a tidy sum of savings in the cash-box. What wonder that Linchen should again make a secret resolve for the celebration of her Heinrich's birthday! Beside the nosegay and the almond-cake which Heinrich liked so much, the chief present was to consist of a beautiful aluminium watch-chain.

However, there must be a good meal on the table, and considering all the circumstances, and their many reasons for economy, she determined to surprise her husband with a roast goose. Baldrian was again let into the secret, and bound to silence by a bribe of sausage.

The roast goose appeared, and, as Linchen had hoped, Heinrich smiled at it with pleasure. He did not grumble about expense this time, as a fat roast goose is, for a family, not such a very expensive dish in Germany, where geese are very plentiful and cheap.

Master Hoffmann was just about to plunge the knife, sharpened and polished up by Baldrian, into the breast of the goose, when an evil genius suggested to Linchen to ask a question which was most unnecessary under the circumstances.

'You will acknowledge that this bird is a goose, and not say that it is a duck or something else; won't you, Heinrich?' she said, jokingly.

'Of course,' replied the master, 'it is a goose; why, a blind man could see that!'

'I am glad you say that,' replied his wife. 'Last year, about the field-fare, when you vexed me so unjustly, I was right too.'

'What! unjustly?' answered the master, drawing the knife and fork out of the goose. 'I tell you you were wrong; they were starlings and nothing else.'

'No, they were field-fare,' cried his wife. 'Baldrian, what were they?'

'Field-fare indeed they were,' asserted Baldrian. 'They tasted most delici—'

Baldrian could not finish the sentence; for, in a fury, and considering himself insulted by such contradiction, the master dealt him a box on the ear, which sent the poor boy howling and sobbing, together with the three-legged stool on which he sat, to the ground.

(Concluded in our next.)

HERDINGTON RECTORY.

(Concluded from page 395.)

CHAPTER VIII.



MOST men do know the whole story and sad end of that hapless rebellion, so I will but briefly tell it.

After the surrender of the rebel army at Preston, Lord Derwentwater and the other chiefs and gentlemen, amongst whom was poor Ambrose, were carried to London, which they did reach in doleful plight on the 9th of December. They were treated in the most shameful manner; when they were come as far as Highgate, each one had his arms tied behind his back, and his horse led by a foot-soldier, while the drums of their escort did beat a triumphant march. They were thus led slowly through the streets, amidst the revilings and insults of the mob, and then secured in the Tower.

It was a cruel deed thus to treat many high-minded gentlemen, who, from a sense of duty, had taken arms for him they deemed their rightful Prince.

But, alas! to our cost we did find that King George was not to be moved to pity. Many were the touching appeals made to him to spare the lives of the prisoners, but he turned a deaf ear to them. Much sympathy was shown by men of all ranks; petition after petition was sent up, but all was useless.

It was no marvel, then, that when my Lady Copinger and Sylvia did by great interest obtain sight of his majesty as he passed across a lobby, and threw themselves at his feet, he did but glance at their petition, and then shook his head and passed on. Who hath not wept over the tragic fate of brave young Lord Derwentwater, who did meet his death with such calm fortitude on Tower Hill? Oh! it was a time of awful suspense for all who had friends amongst the captives.

We had come to London to be near our poor Ambrose, and tho' we had well-nigh lost all hope, yet we did not cease to urge his cause on all we could get access to. And here I will say that Mistress Anne Lennox, Sylvia's aunt, did show us unlooked-for kindness. Whether it was her sympathy with the Stuarts, or whether it was remorse for her past unkindness, I know not, but she was untiring in her efforts for us. Tho' a lady of the Court she did get the whole story told to the Princess of Wales, who was much moved, and promised to use her influence, tho' it might be but small, in favour of young Copinger.

Meanwhile time passed on, and each day we did hear of new sentences. Some were hanged at Tyburn, some were executed in Lancashire, and about a thousand poor creatures were sent to the North American Colonies. A few, more fortunate, did make their escape, like my Lord Nithsdale; but in the case of Ambrose, we did soon find he was in such strict watch there was no chance of that. Still, tho' I durst not whisper my thoughts, for fear

of raising false expectations, each day of delay did seem to me to give some faint gleam of hope.

All this while Sylvia had been our great comfort and support. She was so unwearied, so patient, so tender and thoughtful, that poor Sir Gilbert and Madame had come to be mighty fond of her, and could scarce bear her out of their sight.

One day that we were in our little lodging nigh to the Tower, Mistress Anne Lennox did come in a sedan-chair to fetch Sylvia in haste on some mysterious errand; but we took little heed of this, for how oft had we all of us been forth on fruitless missions! I remember well that day, I had set me down to write to my brother John, who, after biding awhile with us, had gone back to Herdington, for his parish did sore need him, and he felt lost, too, without his beloved books.

Sir Gilbert and my lady had gone out to take an airing, for they were too restless and miserable to stay long within doors; I was still bending sadly over my paper, scarce knowing what to write, when the sound of a quick step on the stair did cause me to look up.

The door burst open and Sylvia entered. Never shall I forget the sudden shock of joy which came over me as I saw her face. It was radiant with happiness, but she was too much moved for words. She threw her arms round my neck, kissed me again and again, and murmured, in a voice broken with sobs,—

‘He is saved! see, here is his pardon!’ And she held out a paper before me, but I could not read it for mine eyes were dim with tears; tears of joy and thankfulness.

‘But we are losing time,’ cried Sylvia, starting up. ‘Put on your hood, quick, dear Aunt Millicent, and come with me. The sedan-chair waits for us, and every moment is precious.’

I did as she bid me, for it was no time to ask questions, and I was too bewildered just then to care much how she came by the pardon. But one thing was certain; here was the precious paper in our hands, sealed and signed, and we were on our way to the Tower to tell Ambrose he was free.

All that followed was like a dream, I can scarce recall anything of what we did; how we saw the governor, how we were led through long gloomy corridors and were delayed awhile in an outer chamber while certain formalities were gone through, and how at length a heavy door was opened, and we were shown into the prisoner’s room. It was a dreary place, for the daylight could but dimly make its way through the heavily barred window. Ambrose was sitting in a posture of the deepest dejection; his arms folded on the table, and his head bowed down over them. It was as tho’ the bitterness of death had passed over him, and he had lost all hope or care of life. At our entrance he looked up, and we could see that his face was pale and worn with the suspense and anguish of the last few months of captivity.

‘You are come to bid me a last farewell,’ he said, rising to meet us. ‘Tis good of you, my sweet Sylvia, to come to this dreary place to see me; but we must look to meet in a better world, where there is no more parting.’

‘Not yet! ’tis not farewell yet, Ambrose!’ said Sylvia, trying to speak calmly; ‘I am come to bring you the king’s pardon!’

He drew back with a startled look, as tho’ in dread lest grief had stolen the poor girl’s wits, but I made all haste, and bid him read the paper for himself. In a moment of great joy as of great sorrow it seemeth to me that the soul of man should be left alone with its God, and that it is almost sacrilege for human eyes to pry upon it.

After the first instant of keen emotion Ambrose was very calm, and let us make all preparations for his departure. I did think it well to leave him to follow with Sylvia, while I did return to the lodging in all haste to prepare his father and mother for the happy meeting which awaited them.

We did not tarry long in the gloomy city, but on the morrow, early in the forenoon, we did take our joyful way back to Herdington. But I must not omit to tell that Sylvia did relate to us at length her adventure on that day, when she received the pardon from the hands of a gracious and royal lady, whom I name not, as she would do her good deeds in secret. And now there remaineth but little more for me to tell, and truly this history hath grown to a length far beyond what I had thought to write.

Before three months had passed away, in the pleasant month of June, the bells of Herdington Church did ring out a merry peal for the marriage-day of Ambrose Coppinger and Sylvia Lennox.

My good brother, the Rector, did read the service and pronounce the blessing on the wedded pair, and as they did come out thro’ the Norman archway their path was strewn with flowers by the little village maidens. Never was bride welcomed into her new family with more love and honour than was our Sylvia by Sir Gilbert and Lady Coppinger. While as for us, John and I, we did feel as tho’ the sunshine were taken away from our home. Still we loved her well enough to be glad in her joy, and to be thankful that she should have peace and happiness after the troublous times she had gone thro’. There was a great feast that day in the tithe-barn for the poor folks, with whom Mistress Sylvia had ever been a mighty great favourite for her pleasant words and kind ways.

It had been counselled to Sir Gilbert by friends at Court, that it were best his son should leave England for a year or two, till the memory of his part in the late rebellion should have waxed faint. Thereupon it was settled that Ambrose and his wife should go to foreign parts, and gain experience in travel, the which they did both look forward to with no small contentment.

Trusting that our dear ones would be preserved from perils by land and sea, we did all take a loving farewell of them.

I did miss my niece sorely at the first, and to beguile the time I did bethink me that, as John did find so much pleasure in his writing, I too would try mine hand at it. So I have set down on paper in my simple way all that hath befallen us in the last two eventful years.

Who knows if in days to come, long years after I shall have passed away from this peaceful Rectory, and my very name shall be forgotten, these papers may not meet the eyes of some, who will read my tale with kindly sympathy and thank the pen of

MILLCENT ALLEN.



"You are come to bid me a last farewell."

Chatterbox.



A Swimming-Match.

A SWIMMING-MATCH.



NOT long ago a swimming-match was arranged at Eastbourne, between a young fisherman named Knight, and a very handsome mastiff dog belonging to Mr. M'Narny. The distance was two hundred yards seaward. At a given signal both man and dog took the water, but the natural instinct of the animal evidently pointed in the direction of saving life, as he immediately swam to his opponent and tried to keep him afloat by placing his head under his chin. Knight, however, being an expert swimmer, and not needing the proffered help, of his four-footed friend, struck out with a view of winning the wager, but 'Oscar' was not to be thwarted in his good intentions, and sought to save his opponent by trying to secure him by the neck! It was found impossible to decide the race, and Knight was taken into the boat, and the dog swam ashore amidst the applause of the spectators.

ANTHONY CANOVA.

(Translated from the French of Michel Masson.)

ANTHONY CANOVA, the great Italian sculptor, was born of poor parents, in the year 1747, in the little village of Possagno, in the Venetian States.

The senator, Jean Faleri, was lord of this village; one day he gave a great banquet. Among the numerous dishes placed upon the table was a lion, beautifully moulded in butter.

This unexpected dish excited the surprise and admiration of Signor Faleri and his numerous guests; he ordered his man-cook to be sent upstairs, for he wished to congratulate him in the presence of the company, so pleased was he with this marvellous work. The cook was shown into the banquetting-hall; they loaded him with so many congratulations that tears came into his eyes.

'You weep for joy?' said his master to him.

'No, my lord; it is with despair at not having done the work which procures me so many compliments.'

'I wish to know the author of it,' said Faleri.

The cook retired, saying that his lordship should be obeyed directly, and a few minutes after the artist was brought in; but the artist was a little peasant-boy about ten years old, indifferently dressed, for his parents were poor: nevertheless, these good people had chosen rather to stint themselves than refuse their son some drawing-lessons which a master had been willing to give him for a small sum. Anthony Canova showed at an early age a great taste for carving; he moulded clay very skilfully when he could get it, and he carved figures with his knife on all the bits of wood he could lay hands on.

Anthony's parents knew the senator's cook; on the day of the dinner he came to tell them of a difficulty he was in to complete the elegance of the table; he had exhausted all the resources which his skill and imagination could suggest, he still wanted

an ornamental dish, which would make a sensation and establish his reputation as a cook in a great family.

Anthony was silent, and then said, 'Don't be uneasy: I shall come to you presently: leave it to me, and I will answer for it that your course will be complete.' The boy went, as he had promised, to the senator's cook; showed him the drawing of the figure he wished to execute, answered for its success, and moulded the butter with much of the skill and taste which he in after life gave so many examples when carving blocks of marble.

If the guests were surprised at the work, they were still more surprised when the artist was presented to them; they overwhelmed the boy with caresses, and from that moment Jean Faleri declared himself Anthony Canova's patron. This first attempt of the little peasant-boy of Possagno made his name famous, and opened the way to future success. Faleri placed him in the studio of Torreti, the best sculptor of the time. Two years after, that is, when Anthony Canova was scarcely twelve years old, he sent his patron two baskets of fruit in marble, which still adorn the staircase of the palace of Faleri at Venice.

E. F. P.

MASTER HOFFMANN'S BIRTHDAY.

(Concluded from page 406.)



HOW can you strike the boy,' cried the mistress, angrily, 'only because he does me justice? You ought to be ashamed of yourself!'

'I have nothing to be ashamed of,' thundered the master. 'They were starlings.'

'For my part,' replied the wife, 'it seems as difficult to wash a negro white as to change field-fare into starlings. I only wonder that you do not call this roast goose a crow or a vulture, or find some fault with it.'

'I have a good deal of fault to find with it,' shouted the angry master. 'In the first place the goose is an old tough bird, and then it is much more roasted on one side than on the other.'

'Did I ever see such a man?' replied his wife, deeply insulted in her character as a good cook. 'More roasted on one side than on the other! That is odious! You want to teach me to roast a goose, when you don't yourself know the difference between field-fare and starlings! I wonder how you can make up your mind to eat any of this hard, tough, badly-roasted goose.'

'Don't flatter yourself that I shall,' replied the master, red with fury. 'I won't taste a morsel of such rubbish—not I, indeed!'

'You had better throw it out of the window, then,' screamed Linchen. 'But, indeed, you have too little courage, and too great appetite, for that.'

Linchen had little counted on the effect of these sharp words; for scarcely had they escaped her lips than there was a crash in the window-pane, and the roast goose, together with the heavy pewter dish on which it lay, vanished through the opening into the air.

'Oh, my beautiful goose! You foolish, insane man! Baldrian, run down; perhaps you may be able to save it,' cried Linchen.

But Baldrian had not reached the street before he saw a group of people assembled round an elegant gentleman who was thrown on to the ground. And up to Hoffmann's garret came the loud voice of old Lauzenhauer, crying out of his vegetable shop,—

Now the Hoffmanns are throwing roast geese and pewter plates out of their windows! Why, down here in the street no one is sure of his life with such wasteful spendthrifts above us!

At this cry of alarm Linchen had anxiously put her head out of the window, and after she had gazed out for a few minutes she drew it back pale as a sheet.

'What is it?' cried the master, terrified. 'Wife, speak; has an accident happened?'

'Heinrich, you have killed a man! They are just carrying the body into Lauzenhauer's shop!' sobbed his wife, wringing her hands.

'God be merciful to me!' stammered out the master. 'Oh, this unhappy hot temper of mine! Leave me; I will go out. I must see what has happened. My poor wife! My poor child!'

Heinrich tore himself from the arms of his weeping and sobbing wife, and rushed down the stairs into the street. Here he made his way through the crowd and pushed into Lauzenhauer's shop, thronged by eager and curious spectators.

'How is he? Is he dead?' cried the master, in despair.

'It won't be so bad as all that,' replied Lauzenhauer, who held in one hand by the neck the roast goose which had been thrown into the street, and in the other the pewter dish. 'If we could only get him out of his hat!'

And in fact Lauzenhauer's wife, together with his neighbour the barber, were zealously employed in releasing a gentleman, who was sitting upon a chair, from his chimney-pot hat, which, struck by the heavy weight of the pewter dish, had come down over the face of its owner, and rested on his shoulders. At this sight Master Hoffmann breathed again. So he was not dead, certainly. He also lent a hand to help, and with a hard pull, somewhat at the expense of the nose and ears of the gentleman, the hat was at last got off. The freed man drew a deep breath. In a few minutes he was restored to complete consciousness.

'There is no fracture of the skull, and I perceive no signs of concussion of the brain,' the barber asserted, consolingly, after he had felt the head of the injured gentleman. 'He is only a little bruised.'

The gentleman had got up, and his countenance assumed the expression of violent resentment.

'Forgive me, sir; I am ready to make any satisfaction,' implored Master Hoffmann, very humbly. 'An unhappy moment of passion caused me to throw a roast goose out of the window, which struck you, quite unintentionally on my part.'

'Who are you?' said the gentleman to the master, with a pleased expression of countenance, after he had stared at him attentively for some time.

Master Hoffmann told him his name and his trade.

'Did you not, three years ago, save a man from drowning?'

'Yes; at St. Thomas's mill, when he was thrown out of a boat, and nearly carried away under the wheels. Why, I believe you are —'

'Yes, I am the same man,' replied the stranger. 'Come with me; I want to speak to you. As to these gentlemen and this worthy lady, who have afforded me so much kind help, I return them my best thanks, and beg their acceptance of this trifle.'

The gentleman put a piece of gold down on the table, and then took up his hat, which bore abundant traces of what had occurred.

'Baldrian,' cried the master, his eyes beaming with joy, to his apprentice, who was just entering the shop, 'Baldrian, take the goose and the dish back, and tell your mistress to come down here quickly. Such a wonderful thing has happened.'

The apprentice seized the goose and the dish, and hurried off. Just as the strange gentleman and Hoffmann were leaving Lauzenhauer's shop Linchen came out of the house, crying and wringing her hands.

'Unhappy man! they are taking him to prison!' sobbed the mistress. 'Oh, sir, he did not kill the dead man on purpose. I was mostly to blame; take me and shut me up with him.'

'Nonsense! What are you chattering about, my dear?' said the master, merrily. 'This gentleman is no officer of justice, as you suppose, but he whom I saved from drowning in 1863; the roast goose struck him, but, as you see, did not hurt him.'

'The gentleman in the water?' said Linchen, as, almost fainting with joy, she sank into her husband's arms.

'Now come, Master Hoffmann,' said the stranger, who began to be annoyed by these explanations, which increased the number of the spectators. 'Good-bye, good woman; your husband won't dine with you to-day, he is coming to dine with me at the hotel.'

'Eat the goose,' said Heinrich, 'and let Baldrian have a leg to make up for the box on the ear.'

A few hours after Heinrich returned home, quite brimming over with happiness.

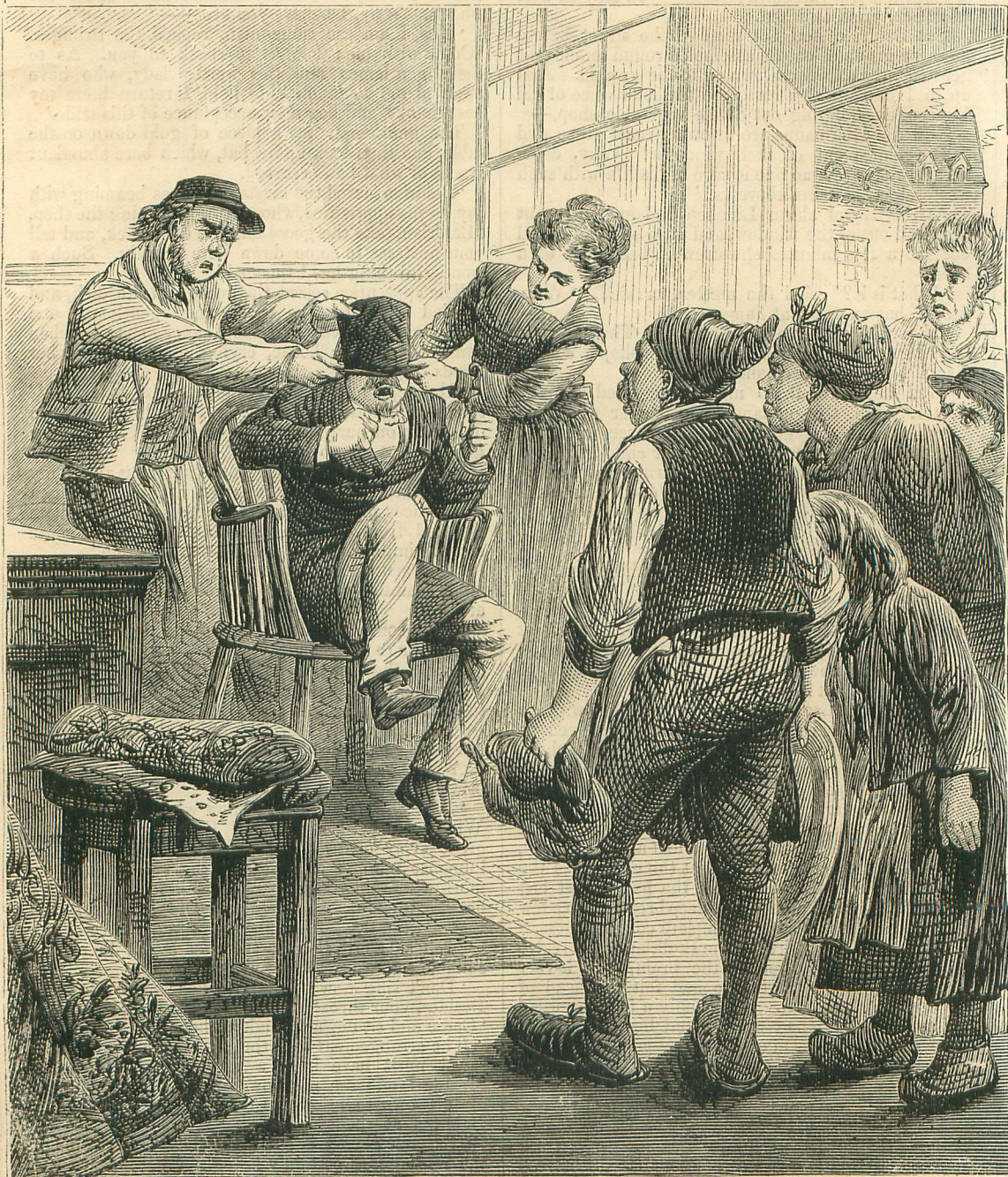
'Wife,' he said, 'do you know whose life I saved? Why the head of the firm of Eisenkopf & Co., the great army contractors! He just now wants an immense number of shoes for the soldiers, and to-morrow morning he is to agree with me about it. I dined with him like a prince. Did I not tell you that a good deed often finds its reward here below, as well as above?' and then he began to sing a suitable song.

'Don't sing now; I want to hear more about it. Besides, your throat is not at all clear,' said his wife. 'Come and sit down for half an hour.'

The arrangement with the head of the firm he had saved must have been a very profitable one, for Master Hoffmann now owns a very pretty house of his own, and works with eight apprentices, Baldrian at their head.

Heinrich always keeps his birthday. But though the roast goose certainly brought great luck to the household, Linchen never thinks now on that family festival of placing any kind of roast bird on the table before her husband.





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